

Father Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Spirituality. Asceticism and Mysticism*

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STĂNILOAE, Dumitru. 1992. <i>The Orthodox Spirituality. Asceticism and Mysticism</i> , Bucharest: Publishing House of the Biblical and Missionary Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church		
Introduction		
5	“While the Christian general and special morals, it presents the conditions of the Christian moral life (the moral law, the conscience, and the freedom), as also the doctrine, in an analytical form, about sins and virtues, regarded as some state of the self connected amongst them, <i>The Orthodox Spirituality</i> presents the process of Christian’s advancing in the road of consummation in Christ, by cleaning himself up of passions and by achieving the virtues, process taking place in a certain order. In other words, <i>The Christian Orthodox Spirituality</i> described the mode which the Christian can advance in, from a cleaning up of a passion, to a cleaning up of another, and, with these, to the achieving of the virtues, the virtues being inscribed on a ladder of consummation and culminating in love, the state representing the cleaning up of	Deification

	all passions and the achieving of all the virtues. Advancing towards this peak, the man advances in the same time in the union with Christ and, with this, in knowing Him through experience, and this means, in the same time, the man's deification."	
5	"In the light of the Orthodox spirituality, the Christian morals no longer appears as a simple fulfilling of some duties imposed by God's commandments, duties bringing the Christian nowhere in this life, but it only provides him with the salvation as external rewards in the future life. The Christian grows up in God still from this life, for the fulfilling of these commandments performs a gradual transformation of his being, of a filling up of his, increasingly more, with the working presence of God." (Stăniloae 1992: 5)	Morals
1. The Target of the Orthodox Spirituality and the Road towards It		
5	"The Orthodox spirituality aims to consummate the believer in Christ. And as the consummation cannot be achieved in Christ except by participating to His divine-human life, one can say that the target of the Orthodox spirituality it is the consummation of the believer through union with Christ and through his ever higher imprinting by the image of the Christ's humanity which is full of God." (Stăniloae 1992: 5)	Spirituality
5-6	"One can say that the target of the Christian Orthodox spirituality is the union of the believer with God, in Christ. But as God is endless, the target of the union with Him, or of	Spirituality

	our consummation, it does never correspond to an end, which one cannot advance anywhere from. All the Eastern Fathers say, therefore, that the consummation is borderless.” (Stăniloae 1992: 5-6)	
6	“Our consummation or our union with God isn’t only a target, but it is also an endless process. Although, on this road one can distinguish two great stages: one, of the advancing towards consummation, through efforts for purifying of passions and for achieving the virtues; and another, of always advancing life in the union with God, in which the man’s work is replaced by the work of God, the man giving rather his receptivity, or his openness in order to be filled up with increasingly more godlike life.” (Stăniloae 1992: 6)	Union
6	“The Christian Orthodox spirituality has the following traits: 1. The culminant state of the spiritual life it is a union of the soul with God, lived and experimented. 2. This union is accomplished through the work of the Holy Ghost, but until obtaining it the man owes a long effort of purification. 3. This union is accomplished when the man has reached “the likeness of God” and it is in the same time knowledge and love. 4. The effect of this union consists, amongst others, of a considerable intensification of the spiritual energies within man, accompanied by all kinds of charismas.” (Stăniloae 1992: 6)	Spirituality
6	“In East it is used also, in order to characterize this union between man and God, also the daring term of <i>deification</i> or	Deification

	<p><i>participation to godhead.</i> The target of the Christian spirituality it would be, so, the living of the state of deification and of participation of the godlike life. The experience, mainly expresses ad state of deification, it comprised firstly two general teachings: 1. <i>The deification represents the last level of the man's consummation, and that's why this supreme phase from the believer's life on earth it is also called as consummation.</i> 2. <i>This deification is accomplished by believer's participation to the godlike powers, by being poured within him the divine limitless.</i>" (Stăniloae 1992: 6)</p>	
6	<p>"For the deification represents the level of the highest consummation on earth, it means supreme normality and actualization of the human powers; and for it is a state of deification – of knowledge, of love, and of spiritual force – experienced by the believer, this state is above the limit of our powers, being fuelled from the godlike power." (Stăniloae 1992: 6)</p>	Deification
7	<p>"The culminant state of the spiritual life it is the state of the believer elevated above the level of his powers, not by himself, but by the work of the Holy Ghost. "Our mind goes out of itself and so it is united with God, by becoming above mind", says Saint Gregory Palamas. This is because of the mind not being able to see what it sees "only by the fact that it has the mental feeling, likewise the man's eye too it would be incapable to see without en external sensitive light and differing from it", says the same Gregory Palamas. While it is</p>	Seeing God

	seeing God, the mind goes beyond itself and all of its mental works receive a work of God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 7)	
7	“If the target of the Christian life is mysterious life, of union with God, the road towards will comprise the ascension towards this peak. As such, this road, on one hand it differs from that peak, and on the other hand it stays with that peak in an organic bond, like climbing the mountain it stays with the mountain’s peak.” (Stăniloae 1992: 7)	Union
7	“One cannot reach the state of consummation and of mysterious union with God except through long efforts or asceticism, and the efforts not tending toward the coronation with that final moment of the asceticism, or towards the mysterious union with God, they seem to be as a purposeless thing.” (Stăniloae 1992: 7)	Asceticism
7	“The bond between asceticism and the mysterious union with God it even tighter than the one between road and target, for, even though the living of this union it takes place at the final end of all the ascetic endeavors, its aurora starts in the soul from before, during those endeavors.” (Stăniloae 1992: 7)	
7-8	“The Christian perfection requires a long string of endeavors in order it to be achieved. The Apostle Paul compares this endeavors to the bodily exercises which the athletes submitted themselves to, in order to become victorious in fights. Without using the term, Saint Apostle Paul used the icon of the old bodily exercises in order to characterize the	Asceticism

	<p>Christian's endeavors aiming to achieve the consummation. Clement the Alexandrine and Origen later introduced the terms of ascesis and ascetic. Gradually, these terms receive in East a monastic tint. The monasteries are called places of exercise, and the "ascetic" is the monk who strives for achieving the consummation by observing all these rules of restraint and or cleaning of passions. Origen gave the name as ascetics to the zealous Christians, who were exercising themselves in mortifying their passions in other enterprises in order to achieve their consummation." (Stăniloae 1992: 7-8)</p>	
8	<p>"A detailed comparison of the ascetic to the fighter from the arena, we are offered with by Saint Nilus the Ascetic in <i>the Ascetic Word</i>. So, the asceticism is that part of the spirituality treating about the rules and the efforts which lead the man from the first stage of the ascension towards consummation, to contemplation and union with God. The asceticism indicates the active part of the spiritual life, the part of cooperation required us by God, the endeavors which we are required to; and the mysterious union with God, a contrary, it indicates the aspect of passively enduring the work of the grace within us, the initiatives of God which we must only follow and which do not belong except to Him." (Stăniloae 1992: 8)</p>	Asceticism
8	<p>"The ascetic efforts also are helped by grace, and the passivity from the phase of the union isn't inertia; this means only that the culminant personal experience doesn't have its source in</p>	Asceticism

	the human spiritual powers, but exclusively in God, while the ascetic efforts are due to an active contribution of the man's soul's powers too." (Stăniloae 1992: 8)	
8-9	<p>"The asceticism is the "killing of the death" from within us, in order to liberate the nature from the death's slavery, as Saint Maximos the Confessor said. This is for there are two deaths: the first one is caused by sin and by nature's death, and the second one is the death in the likeness of Christ, namely the death of the sin and of the death caused by sin. But as the nature's death, as decomposition caused by sin, it doesn't come only in the final moment but it chews like a worm for a long time, likewise the death's death, or of the sin, it isn't only something for the moment, but it is something that must be prepared for a long time through ascetic mortification. Therefore, the ascesis is a gradual elimination of that poison which leads the nature towards decomposition, towards corruption. The ascesis is, in other words, an elimination of that disease that leads the nature towards death and it is a strengthening of the nature. The ascesis is of-life-maker mortification as Saint Simeon the New Theologian called it. It is the gradual killing of the sin and of all then tendencies towards sin." (Stăniloae 1992: 8-9)</p>	
9	"In the current acceptation the word ascesis is associated to a negative meaning. The ascesis would be on all the line: temperance, restraint, and negative endeavor. This opinion is explained by the fact that the sinful tendencies of the nature,	Ascesis

	the habits leading to the nature's death, they have reached to be regarded as the positive side of the life. Actually, the endeavor in asceticism, though seemingly negative, it confronts the negative element from within our nature, aiming, by permanently opposing the sin, to eliminate the sin." (Stăniloae 1992: 9)	
9	"The asceticism has a positive purpose. The asceticism aims to fortify the nature and to liberate the nature from the worm chewing it, from the worm that promotes the nature's corruption. The asceticism plant the virtues instead of passions, the virtues supposing a truly strengthened nature. It is true that the final target of the asceticism it is to liberate the nature not only from the movement of the sinful lusts, but also from the ideas of the things which occur in the mind after the cleaning of passions. But this is only in order to gain independence from the created things, which enslaved the mind before, and in order to desire God even more." (Stăniloae 1992: 9)	Asceticism
9-10	"It is true that the asceticism must prepare to God, on the ascetic efforts' last stage, also a mind emptied of all the earthly preoccupations, namely a pure mind. But this "void" isn't something totally negative. This is for no matter how much they speak about the passiveness of the human factor under the work of the godlike glory, they say nowhere that this passiveness of the mind it would equal to inertia, with a total minus. The mind's "void", offered to God, it positively	Asceticism

	represents a thirst exclusively towards Him ¹ , after a long experience has convinced the human being about the corruption of all the passionate preoccupations and about the relativity of all the intellectual preoccupations oriented towards the created things, which, consequently, the human being has rejected from himself in order to receive God instead of those things ² .” (Stăniloae 1992: 9-10)	
10	“The nature’s weakness is shown – according to the Holy Fathers – in the nature’s lack of firmness, namely in the nature’s fickleness. And this fickleness is proven by the easiness which the mind is attracted by pleasure with and it is pushed away from pain. The nature hasn’t the strength to stay upright when facing these ones, but it reaches instead to a very unmanly vibrability, as a reed blown by wind. The nature’s will and righteous judgment, two of the essential nature’s elements, they totally lose their power. The nature reaches to be like a ball in the passions’ hands, tossed here and there by every circumstance, by all impressions. The nature no longer stands strongly in its freedom, but it has reached to a spiritual weakness which bears all the signs of the corruption; the nature proves by no means an	Weakness

¹ “We reckon that through this positive element of the supreme „thirst” for God, that “void” isn’t a disappearance of any creatural element from the spirit and of any sentiment of creatural, in order to be only with God, as Eckart affirms, consistently with his pantheistic doctrine. (footnote 11, p. 9)

² The mind’s crossing through the created things’ rationalities it hasn’t been vainly, for, even if it rejects now their present memory, he has gained, consequently to them, wisdom - an enhanced understanding - like the virtues have fortified the human being so that now he can be an environment which the work of the Ghost is being done through.

	incorruptibility ensuring it the eternity.” (Stăniloae 1992: 10)	
10	<p>“Killing this weakness sneaked within nature, strengthening the nature through asceticism, it has become possible through the mortification and through the life-maker death of Jesus Christ. The godhead’s power helped Him to overcome His nature’s love for pleasure and fear of death, to make it, therefore, firm. And the mysterious bond which the nature from any human hypostasis is with the human of His divine-human hypostasis in, by becoming through a living and working faith an increasingly effective bond, it determines that force regained by His nature to be communicated to the nature of the other people too, who believe in Him.” (Stăniloae 1992: 10)</p>	Jesus Christ
10	<p>“The ascetic efforts are means through which the human nature each of us bears it participates to the force of Christ’s human nature; this is for in our efforts it is present the Christ’s human force too. The potential bond with Christ it becomes effective to us through the faith in Him, and His force becomes our force. That’s why our asceticism is a gradual death with Christ, as an unfolding of power, a death of the former man, a Baptism’s prolongation through will. It isn’t only an imitation of Christ, as in the West, but it is a heroic mortification with Christ and into Christ. We are united with Christ even before the culminant state of union with Him, even in the prolonged act of our mortification. We do not only resurrect with Christ, but with Him we die too; or, we won’t</p>	Theology

	resurrect with Christ if we do not die with him, firstly.” (Stăniloae 1992: 10)	
11	“The resurrection with Christ it follows like a continuation of the mortification, or of the death, and not as changing direction. It is true that, in the union with Christ in death, His presence is not so visible to us; but this belongs to the fact that while we are gradually dying to the former man, Christ also dies with us; but His death is a humbling too, a hiding of His glory. Christ cannot be seen during our mortification stage, but he is present and we know He is. And founding our certitude regarding His presence within us on faith and not on seeing Him, it again proves the heroic character of the ascetic phase.” (Stăniloae 1992: 11)	Ascesis
11	“The presence of Christ as an unseen force it is indicated by Holy Fathers as Mark the Ascetic and Maximos the Confessor, when telling that Christ is the virtues’ being. If the virtue means manhood, and strength, and the being of this strength is Christ, it is obvious that in our ascesis it works the Christ’s force.” (Stăniloae 1992: 11)	Virtues
11	“The fact that through ascesis one doesn’t aim only to clean himself of passions, but also to achieve the virtues, it shows that the ascesis isn’t something negative, but it is a strengthening of the nature. During the ascesis are suppressed, through long perseverance, the vicious habits, and are planted into nature virtuous habits. And one needs much tenacity in order to impede the old habits to occur	Ascesis

	again, and in order to consolidate the new good habits.” (Stăniloae 1992: 11)	
11	“In this general characterization of the asceticism we owe to notice one of its formal aspects too. The asceticism follows a determined road, an order and a chaining of stages which cannot be disregarded, a precise discipline taking in account the laws of the normal development of the soul’s life, on one hand, and on the other hand it takes in account the faith’s principles. This struggle according to the law it means that its road is established according to a well founded rationality. This fact shed a light also upon the final phase of the spiritual life.” (Stăniloae 1992: 11)	Asceticism
11-12	“The mysterious union with God, which the asceticism will lead us to, it doesn’t stay at somebody’s will on anytime. The union with God is something totally different from the states of confuse affectivity, which someone can transpose into whenever he likes, or which can come upon someone randomly. After walking the ascetic road, in which each moment is placed, not without rationality, at its place, the mind must cross through the stage of knowing the “rationalities” of the created things, as Saint Maximos the Confessor said, and only after he has crossed through this phase too, appropriating the created rationalities and surpassing them, he enters the light of the mysterious union and knowledge. For this phase of knowing the real rationalities and of surpassing these rationalities it is strung	Union

	<p>out too on the ladder of the ascesis, it is obvious that the mysterious union with God, placed at the end of this ascension, it isn't something irrational, but it is something supra-rational, or it isn't a state achieved consequently to a debility of the rationality and of ignoring the things' rationalities, but it is achieved consequently to exceeding all the rationality's possibilities, which is brought to its supreme force and nimbleness, as also consequently to completely knowing the rational meanings of the things." (Stăniloae 1992: 11-12)</p>	
12	<p>"The ascesis as road of the most rigorous practical rationality and of the fullest knowledge of the things' rationalities, it is the proof that one reaches the living of the union with God not by going around the rationality, but by previously using all its possibilities in order out of this too the nature to gain a supreme capacity of becoming vessel of the supra-human understanding, which is communicated by the grace of the Holy Ghost. God is the supreme Rationality, the source of all things' rationalities. The mind elevated in the phase of the union with God to the unmediated contemplation of this Rationality, it must be prepared for the understanding of this bosom of all rationalities, by knowing as many as possible of them, though the limitless-the-more the mind knows it know overshadows the knowledge mode from before." (Stăniloae 1992: 12)</p>	Knowledge
12	<p>"We must point here that the Christian ascesis isn't an</p>	Ascesis

	<p>artificial and unilateral technique, which to produce by itself the living of the mysterious unity with God. Such a false asceticism it has as consequence a false coronation which is characterized by the following signs: a) it doesn't imply any moral condition, but it's a matter of temperament; b) the ecstasy is sought for itself, because of being the supreme goal; c) this kind of ecstasy is sterile, when not being degrading; the man doesn't come out of it neither more educated nor a better man; d) this ecstasy seems like a "hand stretched in a void, out of which it doesn't bring but nothingness". (Stăniloae 1992: 12)</p>	
12	<p>"A first cause of the erroneous conception about asceticism and about the asceticism's culmination in the union with God, it is the wrong opinion that the man has in his possession all the means which can lead him on the supreme spiritual level, and it depends only on a certain training, a more or less ingenious one, in order to bring these means upfront." (Stăniloae 1992: 12)</p>	Asceticism
13	<p>"The Christendom reckons that one cannot reach the unmediated seeing of God without the grace given him by God, and in order to receive this gift it is necessary a moral perfecting of the entire human being through the ceaseless godlike help and there isn't enough a human training in order to awaken who know what asleep force of our nature. In Christendom, God hasn't a nature resembling to an object, which we can conquer through a human incursion guided by</p>	Asceticism

	well prepared tactics; God is a <i>Person</i> and as such, without an initiative of His, He cannot be known. And we must sincerely become worthy of this <i>Self-unveiling</i> of God in a mysterious seeing, and clean, and good. For He is above any offensive that uses force and cunningness. So, the Christians asceticism is a road lightened by rationality - and not only by rationality but also by faith, by prayer, and by the help from God, a road along which the entire our nature is being purified of sin and it is morally mortified.” (Stăniloae 1992: 13)	
2. The Meaning and the Possibility of the Christian Union with God		
13	“The Christian union with God it accomplishes the true meaning of this union. But this meaning it is perverted where one tends to identification between man and God, respectively to an actualizing in conscience of an identity which would have existed previously, as substance, as in case of all the pantheistic religions and philosophies.” (Stăniloae 1992: 13)	Union
13-14	“Some of the Protestant theologians – by understanding through the mysterious union with God exclusively this identification between man and God, and by not admitting the possibility of a direct, unmediated contact with God, a contact which not to be an identification as substance – they reject, in principle, any mysterious union, and they fall in the opposite extreme, of the irreducible separation between man and God. According to those theologians, between man and God there isn’t possible any kind of transmission, no kind of	Theology

	<p>unmediated contact, and just because of that God uses exclusively the word, as they say, in order to establish though a connection between Him and us. "By the fact that God chooses the earthly form of communication of the word" says a Protestant theologian, "it is shown that it is excluded the unmediated union which we would have stayed with Him in, if we hadn't been estranged from Him" (Karl Heim, <i>Jesus der Herr</i>, Furche Verlag, Berlin, 1935, p. 182.); or, as the same theologian says further: "If God comes close to us - and we are with the whole our existence in a movement contrary to Him - in the indirect form of the word, namely in a form which He remains though hidden, this is a merciful sparing of ours. This is because we couldn't have been able to endure the unmediated presence of God". (Heim 1935:183)" (Stăniloae 1992: 13-14)</p>	
14	<p>"The Protestant theologians of the dialectical school, by rejecting any mysterious union with God, they have in their sight, as I said before, the Hindu conception, or the Eckhart's conception, the idealistic one, and, by and large, any sort of religious or philosophical pantheism, to which between man and God there is an "uninterrupted continuity", an evolutionary ascension unstopped by any precipice, the man being in essence and becoming in actuality, by developing one or another of his powers: god." (Stăniloae 1992: 14)</p>	Theology
14	<p>"The Christian teaching though, it is totally stranger to any tendency of the pantheistic identification of the man to God.</p>	Union

	Despite all of these, the Christian teaching courageously affirms the possibility of a man's "union" with God, of an unmediated "seeing" of God, of "participation" to God, by grace." (Stăniloae 1992: 14)	
14	"The Protestant theology cannot see how could be understood a "union" with God otherwise than an identification, more or less total." (Stăniloae 1992: 14)	Theology
14	"We must insist upon the Christian meaning of the "union" with God and of "seeing" Him in an unmediated manner, as also upon the possibility of this mysterious fact. Of course, we aren't going to analyze here the culminant moment of this union, but, for this moment is anticipated also in less intensive degrees also on the previous levels of the Christian life lived in awe ghost, we are going to only highlight here mainly the meaning and the possibility of a unmediated contact with the godhead. This is for once being proven the possibility, in principle, of such a union, no matter the contact's intensity, it is implicitly proven also the possibility of the " union" with God on the peaks from beyond the limit of the human powers." (Stăniloae 1992: 14)	Union
14	"In general terms we have seen that the Christian teaching adopts an average between the identity's mystique and the irreducible separation between man and God. Its justification will be proven by presenting two extreme theses concerning this matter." (Stăniloae 1992: 14)	Mysticism

14-15	<p>“The exclusion by the Christian teaching of the extreme theses – that one of the identity and that one of the absolute separation – it comes out from the man’s character as creature, and from the character of creation of the whole world. And the character as creature of those ones it is a necessary consequence of the absolute character of the supreme Being. If God is the reality Whose power cannot be surpassed by any other power, this power not narrowed by any superior power, it must be shown in the reports of God with the world too. The world cannot be to God a necessary destiny, a continuously variable train, which He must wear forever. The world cannot be an emanation or an involuntary unfolding of His Being. Because, if that had been the case, what he would have shown His sovereignty – above any necessity and law - in?” (Stăniloae 1992: 14-15)</p>	Creature
15	<p>“The world must be a free product of God’s will. And, for the more a being is stronger the less He employs an external matter or His being in order to produce something, God, by creating the world, it is understandable that he exercised the highest form of power we can cogitate at, by not using anything external and neither employing His Being, but by bringing the world upfront through the simple manifestation of His will. This means that the world has been created out of nothing through His word, as manifestation of His will, but not as emanation of particles out of His Being. Consequently, in the world’s constitution, and therefore in the man’s</p>	World

	<p>constitution too, there doesn't enter anything out of the Being of God, as supreme reality, for He is not – and the mind cannot admit to be – an object carried away by the torrent of a power superior to Him. And the world's character as created, it excludes any identity with God – be it no matter how partial. <i>The created reality cannot become uncreated through any evolution.</i>" (Stăniloae 1992: 15)</p>	
15	<p>"The word which God has created the world through, as manifestation of His will, it has however been a manifestation of power. Without God mixing anything from His power in the world's being, although, without this descent of His power in the nothingness which He has brought the world out from, the world couldn't have been produced, as also without this presence of His power around the world and even in the immediate closeness of each things, the world couldn't have been upheld and developed. This is because without the power of God the world would have been reduced, in the last analyze, to the nothingness that has not power to uphold the world. One could say that it had been enough that God to manifest His will from distance in order the world to appear, as it is now enough Him to do in order to uphold the world and to develop it. But this will, in order to be effective related to the world, it must somehow reach as presence of power where the effect is being produced. <i>Everywhere an effect of this power takes place, there must be present the effect producing force, of this power.</i> Thus, each thing from the</p>	Divine Uncreated Energies

	world it has, to his intimacy, the unmediated presence of a working power of God. Through this working power, each of us is, since the beginning, in an unmediated “union” with God, and due to this “union” we exist and we are developed.” (Stăniloae 1992: 15)	
16	“The Christian spirituality considers in addition to this “union” only a gradual increasing and especially a noticing of it through conscience. It is possible this increasing and this noticing from the part of the man through conscience? The Holy Fathers, by affirming this capacity, they reckon as means which this capacity can be achieved through, the cleaning of the soul and of the mind of worldly preoccupations.” (Stăniloae 1992: 16)	Spirituality
16	“Our being isn’t only organic nature or inorganic nature, but it has also a soul endowed with mind and will. In his mind there is a relentless impulse towards knowledge. This impulse cannot be understood without the previous certitude regarding the existence of some external realities which must be known.” (Stăniloae 1992: 16)	Knowledge
16	“N. Hartmann (<i>Metaphysik der Erkenntnis</i>), taking an idea from the Christians thinker Simon Frank (<i>Connaissance et Être</i> 1931), he formulated even more clearly the truth that our mind has, before explicitly knowing a reality, the general conscience of that reality’s existence. Immediately that it has made explicit through knowledge a piece of its reality-object, it has the conscience that, beyond the reality that has become	Knowledge

	object of the knowledge, there is the trans-object, namely the reality that hasn't yet become object of the explicit knowledge. The mind has a previous evidence, of general order, of a reality that always falls beyond its ray of direct ascertainment." (Stăniloae 1992: 16)	
16-17	"Blondel (<i>L'Action</i> , vol. I: 368) says that the mind has not only the previous evidence of a trans-objective reality by and large, but also the evidence of an infinite reality. The mind is more or less aware of the fact that its thirst of knowledge won't be appeased, and that no finite object will content the mind after the mind will have known it. From here comes to the mind, in the same more or less confuse mode, the evidence that this thirst will last forever – the reality having an infinity of relatively endless objects – or it will get rest, though being eternally fuelled, in the knowledge of a general integral reality, infinite in itself, of another nature than what can be finite. And as the first thesis scares the mind as a perspective of endless tiredness never finding its resting in a supreme, total, endless, and unlimited satisfaction, from the alternative staying in front of it in a general mode, it raises up more luminous and more convincing the second part of it." (Stăniloae 1992: 16-17)	Knowledge
17	"Consequently, if the created mind comes in the world with the impulse to know – and to know the infinite One –, this impulse is the proof that the mind is made for infinite, that He has existed before the mind, if from the first moment of	Knowledge

	<p>the mind's awakening the mind presupposes Him as existing. And somewhere there will have to be found a reality to be known, bigger than the mind is, and infinite reality, if in the mind there is such a fiery aspiration towards knowledge and if no finite object can satisfy this aspiration towards knowledge, but rather it disappoints the mind's expectations. The mind is made for searching for God, and the finite realities as they are one by one reached and surpassed they cannot have as object of knowledge the negative purpose of constantly deceiving the mind, of mocking the mind's impulse towards knowledge, but they must have the positive purpose of successively preparing the mind for the great encounter, for understanding the One Who stays at the final end of all things." (Stăniloae 1992: 17)</p>	
17	<p>"Let's analyze for a moment the nature of the mind's impulse towards knowing God and the nature of this implicit certitude the mind has it about Him. Can these be understood in the frame of the thesis that there is a total separation between man and God? Would there be possible to understand this impulse as being locked up in a mind totally separated especially from the infinite reality, as also from the external reality by and large? This relentless impulse towards knowledge it cannot be upheld except by an inexhaustible source. Upon the mind there must be exercised a impulsive and attractive influence by the prime cause of the creation and the creation's ultimate purpose. And the mind's implicit</p>	Knowledge

	certitude about an intelligible infinite reality, as long as the mind hasn't actually known that reality, certitude upheld by this impulse towards knowledge, it show that, before seeing, the mind touches (feels, E. l. t.'s n.), somehow, the reality that follows to be known; this means that the mind is previously in some kind of unmediated bond with that reality, and that reality is felt by the mind like in some kind of darkness." (Stăniloae 1992: 17)	
17-18	"The same consideration could be made related to the tendency of our being to come closer or to inappropriate everything that represents a value. This is also an infinite tendency, which we know about that it won't be satisfied with any finite value, but, by crossing through all those values, it searches for the infinite value which it confusedly feels it as existing. This thirst for the infinite value comes also out of an experience of our concavity, of our insufficiency which we must complete through values existing outside us. The dynamism of this thirst it has in itself something positive, which cannot be explained only through our minus; and this positive force it cannot be upheld in us except by the irradiation and by the attraction of the supreme value, with which, consequently, we are on the line of an uninterrupted bond. But we know that out of the concrete values incorporations, the most worthy of love it appear us to be the human person, for the human person represents the richest and the most complex concentration of values. The objects	Personalism

	present us, each one of them, a sole value, anyway a much reduced number of values. And the objects especially lack the value of the conscience, the value of the knowledge, which are characteristic to the human person and which our loneliness finds the much desired healing in.” (Stăniloae 1992: 17-18)	
18	“The reality of a true communication between God and man, of a bridge stretched between these two poles, and therefore the reality of a possibility to intensify this unmediated bond, it can be concluded also from the nature of the divine Revelation and from the fact that we are able to receive the divine Revelation, by distinguishing it from any earthly communication.” (Stăniloae 1992: 18)	Revelation
18-19	“The Protestant theologians (especially the Dialectical School: E. Brunner, in <i>Wort und Mystik</i> 1928) reckon the word as the sole means of the divine Revelation, and they see in the word something opposing to any real communication and to any kind of contact between man and God, Who just because of that He unveiled His will by word, in order not to show Himself, due to His separation from us. The Protestant theologians of the Dialectical School they discern, of course, the Revelation’s word from the detached idea, from the self-standing idea, or from the own thought which I utter to myself inwardly or with voice, or from the word of another person who is equal to us. The Revelation’s word is always the word of the divine Person addressed to the human person. In word there is unveiled the presence and the will of the	Theology

	supreme Person, of the divine Person, Who has something to do with me. (...) The word is a relation of a living person with me. There are given three elements through the word: the person who speaks to me, me – whom that person speaks to, and the word spoken to me. By hearing the word, I implicitly make the experience that that word is spoken to me by a person differing from me.” (Stăniloae 1992: 18-19)	
19	“The Protestant theologians accentuate upon the word as exclusive means of the divine Revelation, not only in order to exclude the possibility of an unmediated revealing of God, but also in order to exclude that revealing to be confounded to a self-revealing of substrates of our being, in the sense of the pantheistic-idealistic philosophy. The word is the sign of a person who differs from me, and therefore the word is the sign of a total alterity of the divine Person.” (Stăniloae 1992: 19)	Theology
19	“In the Orthodox vision, the Revelation’s word also indicates a communication of mysterious nature between God and man.” (Stăniloae 1992: 19)	Word
19-20	“Due to their tendency of keeping the godhead - even when the godhead reveals himself – in an absolute transcendence, in order not to open by any means the gate to the pantheistic-idealistic philosophy by admitting a communication of God with us, in the continuation of their cogitation upon the Revelation’s word, the Protestant theologians find themselves in contradiction with what they said before. If they attributed to this word some virtues of making known the Person Who	Theology

	<p>communicates it, now they disrobe this word of any special task, of the pure meaning which, usually, a word comprises it. So, for instance, they say that the word uttered by Jesus Christ it doesn't bear anything out of His godhead, but it has a purely intellectual meaning. Thus, the Revelation in Jesus Christ is no longer a crossing of new world in time, but it is the communication of a truth addressed to the man's knowledge, without comprising in itself any sign of being from God, neither any power showing the divine provenance of that word. The mentioned theologians not only that they exclude any psychism from the content of the Revelation's word and from the process of receiving this word, but they exclude, too, any task of spiritual nature which to show this word as a word come from God. Connecting the man to the Revelation is being done through an exclusive act of knowledge. In this the faith consists. "The faith has nothing to do with the religious excitations or feelings; the faith belongs to the spirit's domain" (W. Schmidt, <i>Zeit und Ewigkeit</i> 1927: 79) (in the sense of abstract, intellectualist knowledge)." (Stăniloae 1992: 19-20)</p>	
20	<p>"This is a first contradiction in the Protestant dialectical theology: on one hand, this theology wants to discern the Revelation's "word" from "idea", for the reason that the first one shows its necessary provenance from the divine Person Who directs His attention towards my attention by speaking to me, and the idea is a meaning in itself which tells me</p>	Theology

	nothing about its provenance from another person. But on the other hand, they confound the Revelation's word to the idea in a pure sense." (Stăniloae 1992: 20)	
20	"By what knew and by what knows any believer the revealed word as belonging to a person, namely to the divine Person, as the Protestant dialectical theology argues, if the word doesn't comprise except its intellectual meaning? Or, how could the disciples of Jesus to know that the One speaking to them wasn't a human person, but a godlike person? What were they able to know through, that upon that Person was staying an "accent" making that Person different from any other man? Where the listeners of the prophets had the certitude from, that the prophets were speaking the words of God? To the dialectical theology is very difficult to answer these questions, since it doesn't admit that together with the word of Jesus or of the prophets there was being poured within souls also something from the godlike power, which the listeners were receiving their conviction through, regarding the divine provenance of these words." (Stăniloae 1992: 20)	Theology
21	"Somehow, God stretches through His power, to where a prophetic organ utters His Revelation's word. But in order the listener to receive the certitude of the godlike character of this word, the godlike power steps even further, namely to the listener's soul, as an irradiation out of the word itself, which is different to the listener from any other human word, and as	Word

	a power making the listener able to notice what others, who haven't received this power, or who don't want to receive this power, they cannot notice it. Anyway, the power of the same godhead that speaks through its Revelation's organ it reaches also the listeners' souls." (Stăniloae 1992: 21)	
21	"If the revealed word of God, taken in itself, it cannot be only a pure meaning, but it is also a bearer of the dynamic interest of God in the man, it must bring within us a prolongation of godlike power. The faith's phenomenon, awakened within us by this word, namely the fact that we are created in order to be able to receive this word, it is at its turn a sign of an unmediated bond which it has established with us. In the faith's phenomenon the attention of God encounters the attention awakened by Him within us. But the encounter between two persons through their reciprocal attention it is an encounter through something that is characteristic to each of them: even the fact that somebody's word compels me to answer him it implies my bond with him. But in this unconditional necessity of addressing myself to somebody and of answering him, it is shown the fact that, through all the words and answers, I am in connection with God." (Stăniloae 1992: 21)	Word
21	"The Church Fathers, when speaking about the "mind's feeling", they affirm a mind's direct contact with the spiritual reality of God, and not a simply knowing Him from distance. This is analogue to "understanding" a person whom you are	Mind

	in contact with (see Saint Simeon the New Theologian, <i>The Romanian Philokalia</i> , vol. VI, p. 185). Even the word shows us as being, since the beginning, in a connection with God, ontologically, through a power of His and through the nature which he have been given with. The spirituality makes us aware of this connection.” (Stăniloae 1992: 21)	
21-22	“Our creatural implies the absolute sovereignty of God, by making impossible our transformation in divine substance, no matter how close we would come to Him. Our closeness to God, our raising to understanding Him, it couldn’t be accomplished except if God Himself dresses us up in His own things; but even if we are crossed through by His power, we won’t be able to reject our created being. Our created being doesn’t become uncreated: we become gods by grace, and not by being.” (Stăniloae 1992: 21-22)	Deification
22	“By excluding the two impossible extremes: the total separation from God and the identification to Him, it remains that our report with Him to be developed on the one of long length of a real bond, of a contact that, by starting from the encounter through the spiritual energy of the attention, it might reach the “face to face” sight.” (Stăniloae 1992: 22)	Seeing God
22	“The identification to God, it is excluded not only by His quality as Creator which God has, and by the man’s fundamental quality as creature, but also by God’s character as Person. Besides, God could only be a Person, for the free and conscious existence mode of the person is infinitely	Personalism

	<p>superior to the inert existence mode of the objects, and God cannot be except free and sovereign; but just because He is Person, namely he is an absolutely sovereign Person, He doesn't bring the world to existence by emanating it out of His Being or by involuntary unfolding out of His Being, neither by using - because of helplessness - an external matter, but only by creating it out of nothing. Making abstraction even of this and through God's Person as fact as such, it becomes impossible the pantheistic identification of the man to God, but it gives the possibility of an infinite progress of the man in the communion with God. Namely, firstly by the fact that in His quality as Person God cannot be known by man through a man's cognitive offensive, as one can neither enter the intimacy of a communion with God without God's will." (Stăniloae 1992: 22)</p>	
22-23	<p>"You cannot know the person of your fellow human only through your initiative, or through your aggressive undertaking. In order to know him, he must unveil himself through his own initiative and he does this all the more as it is absent the aggressive element from your tendency to know him. All the more God, the Supreme Person and Who isn't dressed up in a visible body, he cannot be known by the man if He doesn't reveal Himself (Max Scheller, <i>Vom Ewigen im Menschen</i>, Berlin, 1933: 681-686). Through this it is confirmed, in the first place, the thesis of the Christian spirituality, that one cannot reach to see God without a</p>	Personalism

	<p>special grace received from God. But this excludes also the possibility that our being, in our thirst of knowing and appropriating God through knowledge, to reach to absorb the divine essence in ourselves, until indentifying to God. Besides, identifying the man to God it would be equivalent to a disappearing of the human being as distinct being, but it would mean also a disappearing of the world as distinct reality. It would mean that God renounces to the creation's existence. But the, what God has created the world for? Only for ceasing the world's existence by absorbing it within Himself, after He has crossed it through the detour loop of an ephemeral existence? If the form of this created existence hadn't had a value in itself, or it hadn't had the possibility of enjoying the divine values by remaining in itself a creature, it wouldn't have been more logically if it hadn't been created at all?" (Stăniloae 1992: 22-23)</p>	
23	<p>"If the man too has been created as person, the God's intentions it has been that the man too to exist as an irreducible <i>self</i>, capable of defending in his relations of communion his being's intimate hearth. The relations amongst the created persons show us, on one hand, what tight it can be the communion amongst them like, and on the other hand, these relations show us the irreducibility of the selves along with the not consummate union amongst them. These relations are an icon for the man's connection with God. These relations make us understand the relation that</p>	Personalism

	<p>cannot be expressed by words, except contradictorily (Nicholas Kabasilas 1946: 4). On one hand, it is a “union”; on the other hand this union isn’t identification. God overwhelms our being with his gifts and powers, but these gifts and powers do not become gifts and powers belonging to our being. Our being doesn’t become divine being, because of our created self doesn’t become godlike self, and that’s why in this living our self preserves his conscience that, not by his power he enjoys all the good things he tastes, but through God. The spiritual Christian impropriates this affirmation of supreme humbleness, but also of supreme daring: “I am man, but I live as God by what God has given me; I am man, but I am on God’s level by the grace of God which He has deigned to dress me up in.” This expresses the content of Saint Apostle Paul’s words: “I am no longer living, but Christ lives in me” (Gal. 2: 28). Namely, my own self of man, he hasn’t ceased to exist, for I continue having the conscience of my own self, since I am affirming it; but my own self lives the life of Christ. I have remained man according to my nature, but I have become Christ according to the powers which my own self is now living through. This is the experience of the Christian on the supreme peaks of his spiritual living.” (Stăniloae 1992: 23)</p>	
3. THE ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY AND THE PARTICIPATION OF THE SPIRITUAL MAN TO THE LIFE OF HIS FELLOW HUMANS		
24	<p>“The detractors affirm that the Orthodox spirituality would urge to an indifferentism regarding the life, to a withdrawal</p>	Movement

	from the life's unfolding, to a premature eschatological attitude. This opinion is totally wrong. Saint Maximos the Confessor, especially, he highlighted the movement of the creation build up by God and the necessity that each man to participate to this movement, if he wants to reach the consummation represented by the mysterious union with God. This is for the movement, by and large, it is meant to elevate the man on a level of greater kindness and consummation." (Stăniloae 1992: 24)	
24-25	"Actually, the world appears to us like being in a process of continuous "eschatological parturition", as Maurice Blondel says, in which each part is determined by the entire universe, and it determines at its turn the whole, and "the relative fixity of the beings implies an unfolding having multiple phases which cannot be isolate from one another, without grave risks" (Blondel, <i>L'Action</i> : 316-317). The world's purpose, as the Holy Fathers said, it is to unveil the deified spirit. That's why, this solidary unveiling doesn't take place only in the closed system of the physical order, but it influences also the spiritual existence of the beings as persons, and their deeds too, which are generated by ideas and sentiments, and it influences the physical unfolding of the universe, as those persons influence each other too. In a word, the spiritual and the physical order of the created world take place in a solidary manner, through an inter-influence circulating throughout the whole physical and spiritual universe. Even the smallest	World

	gesture of ours, it puts the world in vibration and it modifies the world's state. In the same time, the existence of each person and of each thing is always depending on the convergence of the factors which are produced by the unfolding of the whole (Blondel, <i>L'Action</i> : 414)." (Stăniloae 1992: 24-25)	
25-26	"The unfolding of the world it doesn't take place randomly and isn't lacking a target. One cannot do whatever he wants with the external world. Only by taking in account the possibilities and the natural laws from within nature, the man can subdues the world usefully. Shaping the nature for the human purposes is prefigures in the nature itself (...) This truth was formulated in even more appropriate terms by Saint Maximos the Confessor, when he said that in the created universe are hidden the divine rationalities, and our mission is that, through our action led by the rationality from within us, to fully highlight these rationalities and the harmony amongst them, which subordinates them to a major rationality. The technical civilization, by discovering one by one the nature's energies and the laws of using them, it highlights increasingly many of these rationalities and increasingly vast connection amongst them, and the taste for harmony and aesthetics of the diverse civilizations, by shaping the nature as man's environment, it makes these rationalities to be spread upon the things' faces as a light. But because both the work of the human spirit who invents, and	World

	<p>the physical movement from within world, are the wanted prolongation on the created plan of the uninterrupted and eternal act of the divine Rationality (Blondel, <i>quoted work</i>), we could say that the world's unfolding on the line of the discovery of the rationalities from within world, it will last until God wants to keep the world in existence, and only in the harmonious frame which these rationalities are in the divine Logos. By the fact that in the rationalities from within things is reflected the divine Logos, the road we must walk until discovering and understanding - through the rationalities - the divine Rationality, it cannot be defined, for we cannot specify a term for the development of this world in all its possibilities. But if the purpose of this unfolding is that the man to see increasingly more the harmonious rays of the divine Rationalities spread upon the world's face, as springing up from the things' bosom, than it will be obvious that the man mustn't cause amongst these rationality an impossibility of coexistence (by polluting it, by exhausting the energy sources etc.).” (Stăniloae 1992: 25-26)</p>	
26	<p>“To the work of developing the world in all its possibilities, work guided by the divine Providence, but done through the created conscious beings, everybody ought to participate. The Christian spirituality, far from sparing somebody of this collaboration, it imposes it to each one as a <i>sine qua non</i> condition in order to reach the consummation. From Evagrius Pontius, or even from Origen, to Saint Maximos the Confessor</p>	World

	and further, the believer who wants to achieve the consummation, before reaching to be a <i>γνωστικός</i> he must be a <i>πρακτικός</i> . This is for one won't become capable of seeing the rationalities from the things, and through these rationalities to see God-the Word, if he doesn't dedicate firstly to the "working philosophy", or to "fulfilling the commandments". (Stăniloae 1992: 25-26)	
26-27	"Fulfilling the commandments" doesn't consists only of an activity directed upon nature, but in an activity that takes in account also our fellow human and ourselves. We do not have only the mission of unfolding the latencies situated within the physical nature, but also those latencies much more valuable and more spiritual ones existing in each of us. Through the attention, through the advise, through the teaching, through the example we are giving to somebody, by cooperating with him, we help to be actualized the spiritual potencies places in him and in us. And we work upon ourselves by disciplining our behaviors, by paying a relentless attention to everything we do and think, through the good we are doing to others. We do not meet Christ only within ourselves, but also in the fellow humans' beings. Saint Isaac the Syrian insistently asks us to accompany our prayer with the giving of alms and with the help granted to others. He says: "Nothing can bring my heart closer to God than the giving of alms does". Or: "If you have something more than you need for the day, share it to the poor and then come end bring your prayers daringly"	World

	<p>(Word 23). Or: "Uphold with your word the sad ones and you will be upheld by that right hand that bears everything" (Word 30). And Saint Simeon the New Theologian says: "The Lord accepted to take upon Himself the face of any deprived man and to unite Himself with everyone, in order everyone by seeing his brother as God, to receive him and to reckon him as That One and to empty his riches in order to serve him, like Christ shed His blood for our salvation". And the Saint says again: "The one who thinks at God he honors every man, and he finds help through the hidden will of God. And the one who defends the oppressed one he has God as ally. And the one who offers his arm in order to uphold his neighbor he receives the arm of God to his help." (Word 23)." (Stăniloae 1992: 26-27)</p>	
27	<p>"The activity which we help to forming our fellow human and ourselves through, it is crystallized in virtues which culminate in love. And these are actually the necessary stage which our being must cross through, before reaching the illumination and the mysterious union with God. But one cannot do a total separation between virtues and the activity oriented upon nature. We must prove to our fellow human our love also through our work done for him, and not only through words. You cannot give him a present, or alms, you cannot help him, without a productive activity upon nature. And on ourselves too, we couldn't completely form and we couldn't harmonically form if we do not participate at least once to a</p>	Virtues

	physical activity directed upon nature; and by this we achieve certain virtues of patience, of discipline, and of abnegation.” (Stăniloae 1992: 27)	
27-28	“Blondel discerns between the types of activity: the elementary type of the human action, consisting of doing something out of a substance; the action we “make the man” through, we express in our profound nature our essentially human aspirations, forming our character: and the contemplation, which lack any passive matter from, or any interest, or any useful purpose, and just because of this having the greatest efficacy in perfecting our spiritual energies. But there is no total separation amongst these activities. In working upon nature, the man exercises some virtues too, and he forms his character too, and, indirectly, he pursuits a service in the favor of his fellow humans. That’s why, the spiritual toils never disregarded the manual labor as means of purification and of guiding the believer to consummation. And we believe that today, when the technical civilization has brought a great variety of new activities related to the nature, nothing would impede the believer of pursuit his consummation even by practicing a trade by using machineries.” (Stăniloae 1992: 27-28)	Activity
28	“The road towards the Christian consummation it doesn’t exclude any kind of work, but it requires that through each work to pursuit the achieving of the virtues. Nobody must imagine that the work he does it is a purpose in itself, but	Work

	<p>that work is meant to beautify his nature with the virtues of the patience, of the restraint, of the love for his fellow humans, of the faith in God, and, gradually, to open his eyes regarding the wise rules placed by God in all things. By this, the worker doesn't let himself to be carried away by a random flowing of his life in time, but he strives to guide his life's development towards its true targets. The ultimate goal of the work and of the participation to the world's life it is not so much the unfolding of the nature, but it rather is the normal development of the latencies from within man and from within his fellow humans. Even in enduring the troubles, which is one of the most important means of the Christian asceticism, we do not have a running away from the world's life, but we have a persevering within world. And the care for the fellow humans' forming, by adorning them with virtues, it doesn't mean non-participation to the world's life, but it means the fullest collaboration, if the man is part of the mankind, and his forming is the ultimate target of the creation." (Stăniloae 1992: 28)</p>	
28-29	<p>"Even the individual who has reached the peaks of the spiritual living, when the main thing to him is no longer the external activity, but it is the contemplation, he exercises an influence upon the world's development, through the attraction and the power which he exercises upon his fellow humans, in order these ones to become – by the same fulfilling of the commandments, by the same virtuous work –</p>	Love

	like him. he imitates God Who, though He is unchangeable, he doesn't stop through this non-changeability the dynamism of the creation – but, through the impulse and through the ceaseless attraction He exercises upon creation, He upholds the creation's dynamism, by giving it as ideal target His supreme perfection, which is unchangeable just because of that. The spiritualized man who has reached the peak of the consummation, he exercises upon his fellow humans some impulse and an attraction making them to strive in order to reach the final target. This is for the highest virtue which the spiritual man struggles for, it is the love. In love there is knowledge too. And the love for God cannot be separated from the love for people.” (Stăniloae 1992: 28-29)	
29	“The true manhood and the true initiative are proven in his live not by that one who thinks that he is carried without freedom by the indefinite flux of the world, without any direction, but by the one who knows the direction and the target of his life's consummation and of the world's consummation, and he knows that through his freedom he can contribute to the normal guiding of this unfolding which advances towards love, and who is responsible for the spiritual form which he imprints to his live.” (Stăniloae 1992: 29)	Love
4. The Holy Trinity – the Basis of the Christian Spirituality		
29	“The Christians spirituality, by having as target the man's deification and his union with God without being confounded	Personalism

	to Him, it has as its basis the conviction in the existence of a God as Person, Who is supreme source for the love irradiating out of Him, and Who, by cherishing the man, he doesn't want to merge the man to Himself, but He wants to maintain and to elevate the man up to an eternal dialogue of love. Such spirituality cannot take place where it is affirmed an evolutionary progress of the man in connection with a divinity conceived as impersonal essence. That sort of progress cannot have any other result than a man's getting lost in the impersonal divinity." (Stăniloae 1992: 29)	
29	"God as Person, and therefore as supreme source of love, He cannot be conceived as singular Person, but only as community of Persons in consummate unity. Behold why, the Christian teaching about a Trinity of Persons in a consummate unity it is the only one that can constitute the basis of a consummate spirituality of the man, understood as full communion with God in love, without the man being lost in this communion." (Stăniloae 1992: 29)	Personalism
29	"A Catholic theologian, Georg Koeppen, was the one who highlighted the best the Trinitarian basis of the Christian spirituality, and, in the same time with this, also the fact that this spirituality has been preserved the best in the Eastern Church, for this Church alone is the one who has preserved in the most unaltered mode the Biblical teaching about the Holy Trinity and the central place of it in the Christian awe. He ascertains that in the religions which it is unilaterally	Theology

	<p>accentuated the monotheism in, there is no longer a place for such spirituality; and in the religions tending to pantheism, even if the divinity is manifested in a plurality of gods as expressions of the nature's forces, there takes place a false spirituality, or an illusory consummation, namely a consummation leading the man to his merging in the so-called divinity." (Stăniloae 1992: 29)</p>	
29-30	<p>"On one hand, the man's personal consummation, through his eternally non-confounded union with God, it cannot take place except where one believes in a man's external eschatology, in the man's happy union with God. But such eschatology is the due consequence of a Trinitarian God." (Stăniloae 1992: 29-30)</p>	Holy Trinity
30	<p>"The man's union with God for eternity, it is guaranteed and mediated only where One of the godlike Persons has embodied Himself as man for eternity, manifesting through this the eternal love of God for the man as man. Koepgen considers that the Orthodoxy has maintained the spirituality characteristic to the Christendom as revealed in Christ, but the fact that it has preserved the mystery of the Trinitarian community of the Persons in God, not-weakened by a rationalist philosophy which, rather accentuating the unity of God, it has highlighted more His essence. We could add here that just out of this rational accentuation of that unique essence of God, a philosophy trying to avoid the paradoxical joining of the unity with the Trinity of the Persons, it has</p>	Theology

	come out also the “Filioque” doctrine, that of the proceeding of the Ghost out of what the Father and the Son have as common, namely out of the divine essence, and thus the essence is considered as the cause of the Person, and that actually leads to an impersonal God, namely to a pantheistic God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 30)	
30-31	“Out of this insufficient distinction between the living and Trinitarian-ly irreducible God, and therefore Person, of the New testament and of the Holy Eastern Fathers, and that one of the Scholastic Theology impregnated by Aristotle-ism, or out of confounding the last one to the one of the generally pantheistic philosophy, it comes also the using by the scholastic theology of the same name of “mysticism”, in order to express the Christian’s union with God, term used by the philosophical pantheism, leading to the reproaches the which Protestants bring to this notion.” (Stăniloae 1992: 30-31)	Theology
31	“The Orthodoxy preferred, especially during the period of the Holy Fathers and in the writings of the great ones who live/lived the union with God, in order to express the content of the term Mysticism”, to use the terms of: “life into Christ”, “life into Ghost”, “spiritual life”, “life into God”, in order to express the Christian’s life in union with God, no matter the level which this union will be on. The Orthodoxy has been following, in this regard, the example of Saint Apostle Paul (Gal. 3: 28; 3: 20, II Cor. 4: 11; I Cor. 7: 8; 3: 16; 2: 12: Rom. 8: 15; 8: 9-10; Ephes. 3: 16-17; Col. 3: 3; Jn. 14: 23; 1 Jn. 3:	Mysticism

	24 etc.).” (Stăniloae 1992: 31)	
31	<p>“Koeppen continues: “God and the divinity isn’t the same thing. When the mystic (the spiritual man, <i>o. n.</i>) speaks about God he doesn’t understand a metaphysical divinity (<i>ens a se</i>), but he thinks at the Trinitarian God, Who has united Himself, in a totally incomprehensible mode with the man and He has saved the people. If the Christendom has at its basis the faith in the Holy Trinity the spirituality is part of the Christendom’s being itself: “The Mysticism (the life in connection with God, the life having God in itself, in diverse degrees, we would say), it isn’t an appendix later annexed to Christendom, that would be offered as a new possibility to a specially endowed souls; it belongs to the act itself of the faith” (which is an act of entering the connection with God, but which can be developed through purification of passions, we would say). Due to its philosophical rational concept of God, which introduces a distance between God and man, “the report of the Catholic theology with the Mysticism (with the spirituality, we would say) it is a very unclear one”.” (Stăniloae 1992: 31)</p>	Theology
31	<p>“The Orthodox teaching remains faithful to the New Testament: it doesn’t rationalize the Mystery of the God in Trinity, but, based on experiencing God Who communicates Himself to us in love, into the Ghost, through the uncreated energies, it doesn’t keep God neither at distance from us, as in the rationalist-monotheistic religions (Judaism and Mohammedanism), nor it leads us to the merging with God,</p>	Theology

	as in the pantheistic religions and philosophies., who know as unique reality an essence of some sort.” (Stăniloae 1992: 31)	
31-32	“As example of false or deceiving spirituality, or mysticism, characteristic to the pantheistic philosophy, which doesn’t promise to the human being except the merging in the impersonal divinity, Koepgen gives the following quote from Plotinus: “He (the mystic) doesn’t see two, and the seer (the contemplative) doesn’t distinguish two, neither he thinks at two, but he becomes another and he is no longer himself; and by reaching there he no longer belongs to himself but he belongs to that one who is one with him, the central point united with the central point” (The Sixth Ennead IX, 10 and the followings). And Koepgen comment this place by saying: “Plotinus shows us here the essence of the neo-platonic mysticism, which has an undeniable foundation, for the essence of God is cogitated as pure idea and it is places on the same plan with the categories of the human spirit and in relation with the human spirit”.” (Stăniloae 1992: 31-32)	Theology
32	“The Occidental Mystical theology, towards its loss, it has almost totally overlooked its connections with the Eastern Church’s Tradition and it saw in Eckhart or in the Spanish mysticism the culminant point of the mystical cogitation, by and large. The thought at the Holy Trinity it passes here on the last plan” (Stăniloae 1992: 32)	Theology
33-34	“There is also another alternative for the Occidental Mysticism, lacking the living relation with the Persons of the	Divine Uncreated Energies

	Holy trinity. Founding itself on more or less rational arguments - says Koepgen in the same pages – namely on considerations from distance, that God must be a loving God and therefore he must be, at its turn, loved - this alternative becoming a feeling in subjectivity, a sentimentalism not-anchored in the unmediated experience of God. To this leads the absence, in the Occidental theology, of the doctrine of the uncreated energies which come within us, absence staying in connection with the conceiving of God rather as essence than as loving communion of Persons.” (Stăniloae 1992: 33-34)	
34	“Georg Koepgen doesn’t shy seeing the fully systematized beginning of this philosophical, non-biblical, essentialist, and impersonal or non-Trinitarian understanding, just at Thomas Aquinas who, according to the author’s information, “has suffered a profound collapse at the end of this life, due to the fact that everything he wrote before appeared to his as unsatisfactory. There will maybe come a day – and we want to see it as soon as possible – when the theology will take equally serious this event from the Aquinas’ life, as anything else from it. Anyway, this would essentially contribute to bring that shaking in the scientific-theological activity, which is connected to the best traditions of Paul, of Augustine, of Pascal, and of Newman”.” (Stăniloae 1992: 34)	Theology
34	“Koepgen reckons as necessary a turning back to knowing God not based on the laws of a deductive rationality, but on really experiencing Him, or of His power working within us. Of	Knowing God

	this consists the Christian “gnosis”, differing from the pagan “Gnosticism” which is actually pantheistic and it doesn’t know the transcendent God through experience – God Who comes within us by the grace of His love.” (Stăniloae 1992: 34)	
34	““Our thinking from today it has been accustomed so much to identify “the logics” with the “rationality”, so that it judges the correctness of any thinking according to the measure which that thinking corresponds to the “logics” in. But in reality, the logics suppose the Plato’s doctrine about ideas, or the Aristotle’s concept’s unity. For this ideas’ doctrine there is no place in the Bible, because of here the whole thinking is preoccupied not with the ideas but with the person; it is existentialist” (Koepgen). And the person is infinitely more than the ideas are, through his indefinable, living, passionate, always new and thirsty for a living and loving relation with other persons. Only the person really warms me up. The ideas are only some partial products of the person, or non-fully communication means amongst persons. And the person’s thirst for endless relations with other persons it implies both the eternity of the persons and the source of this eternity of theirs, in a supreme community of persons.” (Stăniloae 1992: 34)	Personalism
5. The Christological– Pneumatological – Churchly Character of the Orthodox Spirituality		
38	“What essentially differs the Christian spirituality from any other spirituality it is, besides the fact that the Christian spirituality doesn’t affirm the identification of the man to the	Christ

	godhead or to the total essence, it is its Christological character. The Christian's ascension towards God it has Jesus Christ not only as norm but also as way, according to His declaration: "I am the way..." (Jn. 14: 6). Nobody can advance towards the mysterious union with God by following another way than Christ (= the Way), and nobody in this union can reach beyond Christ. And our connection with Christ it is done and it is strengthened through union with His Holy Ghost." (Stăniloae 1992: 38)	
38-39	"The Christendom considers any other union with the godhead, namely a union not accomplished through Christ and into Christ, it is an illusion. This is for Jesus Christ is the only "Mediator", Who has given God to the people, as ladder towards Himself. "Through Himself he deigned to reconcile all the things with Himself, either those on earth or those from heavens, making peace through Himself, through the blood of His cross" (Col. 1: 20). For in Him we have, all of us, closeness to the Father" (Ephes. 2: 18)." (Stăniloae 1992: 38-39)	Union
39	"Jesus Christ is the bridge stretched from God to the realm of our humanity, through His one hypostasis, a hypostasis joining both the godlike nature and the human nature." (Stăniloae 1992: 39)	Christ
39	"Even if we make abstraction of embodiment, the Son of God is the One "in Whom all the things are settled", for "in Him all the things have been made" (Col. 1: 16-17). He is not only	Christ

that one in Whom the Father looks at His own brightness, but He is also that One in Whom the creation can contemplate the glory of the Father. By having a revelatory purpose, the Son has been appointed for - and in report with the world - he to be the Trinity's Revelation. When God undertook the bringing of the world out of nothing to existence, to the Son has belonged the role of standing with the world in the most immediate contact. The deeps of absolute transcendence of the godhead, which the world cannot become aware of by any means that they exist, those depths, become through the Son, somehow cognoscible by the mankind. Through His Son, God is to the world by and large, a voice sounding within nature, as sign proving His existence, namely a "Word", and also through the Son, God is to the world, somehow, "Rationality", namely a reality that can be understood to a point, or cause which the world is ordered through, it is explained, and it explains all things to itself. That's why the world has been created through the Son, in order to be capable of receiving the relation with the Son. The Son is the reflex of light of the Father within world, through the "rationalities" or through the meanings and the purposes dwelling within all things, without which the world would be sunk in the most discouraging darkness and lack of meaning. Even the imperfect, unilateral, and non-savior ascension to God, through our rationality touched by the sin's disease, it still is only an ascension through the Son and into the Son as

	supreme Rationality of all things and as the last one that we can somewhat notice out of God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 39)	
39-40	<p>“God has made through the embodiment of this “Word”, of this “Rationality” of His, a step forwards in exiting His transcendence and coming close to us. He Has made Himself to us, in Christ, a “voice” of love, sounding of all the affection familiar to us, of a human being. But this means that the man himself has been made capable of becoming environment through which the Son of God communicates himself to us. He is now in a maximum closeness to us and in an ontological bond, and that makes that in the whole road we ascend towards God we are not alone, but with Him and in Him. But this objective fact is corroborated to the subjective fact, manifested in the conscience awakened by the Holy Ghost, that this ascension we do not do it out of our powers, as some enterprise which we are going to conquer the divinity through, a divinity staying in front of us passively and impersonally. As Christians we have, starting with the lowest level of our spiritual state, the conscience sensitized by the Ghost that in this tiresome and long undertaking we are ceaselessly in connection with Jesus Christ, Who stays next to us, upholding our walking, but Who also stays in front of us as role-model, calling us towards Him and towards a fuller communion with Him, like a friend does, a friend who is better than you in all respects, and who is next to you on the road you walk towards the moral consummation, but who is</p>	Christ

	also above you and always attracting you there. Where there isn't Jesus Christ, where the godhead is reckoned as an absolute transcendence, the godhead cannot have a personal face for the eyes of the adherents; in such a case the godhead is conceived according to the nature of the hidden forces, which one tries to approach to on occult ways, ways that belong only to the human factor, that force not having a personal initiative and the capacity of offering a loving aid by entering the personal communion." (Stăniloae 1992: 39-40)	
40	"Christ is since the beginning the "Way" for the ascension towards God, even since the phase of the practical asceticism, when it would seem to us that we are preponderantly focuses on ourselves." (Stăniloae 1992: 40)	Asceticism
41	"The Lord is hidden in His commandments and in the striving for achieving the virtues, not only as norm, or as role-model divided in principles of behavior, but He is also as personal power working in them, for only a superior person gives commandments. The commandments, anyway, they have an attraction too, and who puts them at his heart he feels Christ's helping look always directed upon him, for the Lord not only that he has given us commandments once and for all, but He gives us these commandments on each instant. So, in the individual endeavor to fulfill the commandments there is the help from Christ too." (Stăniloae 1992: 41)	Commandments
41-42	"If through the commandments the Lord offers Himself to us, so-saying from outside us, hidden but present in these	Commandments

	<p>analytical features of His image, in the virtues which show our bond to the commandments and the progress in this living synthesis between us and commandments, the Lord manifests Himself within us too. In commandments, considered in themselves, the Lord hides Himself as personal and attractive power; in the endeavor of working through virtues, the Lord is hidden as personal active power. This is for the Lord is hidden since baptism in the inner sanctuary of our being, urging us towards fulfilling the commandments, by what we imprint on our spiritual cheek as Lord's features. Thus, these features gradually clarify under the impulse of His commanding force that works from inside out, and which is not but Jesus Christ Himself, the One dwelling in our deep, and Who is not obviously notice in the beginning. The presence of Christ it becomes to us increasingly obvious inside us, by manifesting increasingly luminous also in our external behavior, in our virtues." (Stăniloae 1992: 41-42)</p>	
42	<p>"If in the beginning Christ is, to say so, buried in commandments and within us, on the measure we attach ourselves to commandments, with His power that is inside us, achieving out of this collaboration the virtues as living features, which mirror the Lord's image, Christ raises Himself increasingly luminous from under these veils. That's why Origen and Saint Maximos the Confessor considered the road of the pious Christian, from working the commandments to knowledge, as a mysterious road of the Lord within us, from</p>	Commandments

	<p>His descending on earth in a humble countenance as servant, until His ascent of the Tabor Mountain, where the godhead showed Himself in all His glory. The ascension from the ascetic efforts to the mysterious contemplation of Christ, we are undertaking it through Christ, towards Christ. During this ascension we aren't alone even for a moment, or going out of this "Way" and tending towards another target. Christ's life on earth is thus a permanent actuality, being repeated with each of us, like a teacher crosses, with each growing up child, all the phases of his teaching. Each of us is contemporary to Christ with the whole our life, or better said, He makes Himself contemporary to each of us, and even more than contemporary, namely partaker to the entire trajectory of our life, by imprinting Himself within each of us." (Stăniloae 1992: 41-42)</p>	
42	<p>"Rather Christ makes Himself contemporary to us for the life of each of us it has its uniqueness, which cannot be lost. Jesus participates to all our sufferance, easing it, and He fights together with us the temptations and our sins, and he strives together with us in order to achieve the virtues, and he takes our true nature from under the sin's seal." (Stăniloae 1992: 42)</p>	Christ
42-43	<p>"We know that there is an intercommunication from man to man; it is a fact that, on the measure the people are interested in another, they pass to one another, mysteriously, their burdens, their pains, and their joys; it is a fact that one</p>	Christ

	<p>can feel all the other's states, by receiving that one in himself, or by penetrating within that one. But if the man reaches through the sensitiveness of the love to know and to understand his fellow humans, by burdening himself with the living of all their experiences, all the more can this be done by Jesus, the culminant Man, the consummate Man in His love for the fellow humans, the Man Whom His consummate cleanness of sin and therefore of egotism it gives a unique sensitiveness. He is nigh to everybody, he notices with supreme finesse what is in everyone, and he participates generously and without sin to the vibrations of all hearts, to their good aspirations and to their struggles against evil, by fortifying them." (Stăniloae 1992: 42-43)</p>	
43	<p>"Christ's entering within us it takes place through the Holy Mysteries; through the Baptism's washing, through the anointing with the Holy Chrism, and by being us imparted with Him on the Holy Table." (Stăniloae 1992: 43)</p>	Holy Mysteries
43	<p>"Of course, we must collaborate with Christ Who dwells within us through the Holy Mysteries; otherwise we won't be saved. But the basis of our possibility for collaboration it is set up from above, where the Christ's grace is." (Stăniloae 1992: 43)</p>	Holy Mysteries
43-44	<p>"Christ, dwelling within us since Baptism, he leads powerfully not only our endeavor of adorning us with virtues, namely not only the positive work for fortifying through will the new man into Christ, but he leads also the negative work, that of killing</p>	Asceticism

the sin, of weakening, through will too, the former man. This is for the new man in Christ doesn't grow up and he doesn't stretch within us except on the measure the former man cedes and diminishes. In fuelling this spiritual process with power it is manifested the meaning of the Baptism as participation, of the one who is being baptized, to the death and to the resurrection of the Lord. The Baptism's Mystery isn't only a momentary accomplishing of a mysterious death and resurrection of the one who is being baptized, but it is also the inauguration of a process in which these death and resurrection continues to consummation. This continual death is an aspect of the asceticism, and it is the struggle against the former man of the sin; the resurrection is the positive aspect, it is the growing up of the new man of the virtues. The death is intertwined with the suffering. We chock up and we cut off from us a way of life that was characteristic to us. But then we think at the fact that the Lord too, he suffered dying and through our suffering we participate at our turn to what he suffered. In this meaning, the asceticism is our participation to the death and to the resurrection of the Lord, in the continuation and in the actualization of the Baptism, through our personal efforts. Christ, as source of power sustaining the endeavor of the asceticism, He is the force, He is the "being" both of the virtue, as positive side of the asceticism, and of the struggle against the former man, of the sin." (Stăniloae 1992: 43-44)

44	<p>“Christ leads the work of killing the former man within us, not only by the power he gives us, from outside to inside, in order to willingly fight the sinful habits, but also through our trials and tribulations of all sorts which he allows to come upon us. If we accept these tribulations, they gradually purify us; if we rebel against them, we sink ourselves even more into sin. Christ is the One giving us the power for endure the tribulations. In this sense, He participates together with us to enduring the tribulations, and also in this sense, he humbles Himself together with us, by burying Himself in a kenosis, in a death which He repeats in the life of each of us. This is the death which, in the same time, it is an ascent.” (Stăniloae 1992: 44)</p>	Sufferance
44-45	<p>“If the Orthodox spirituality has a Christ-centric character and if this Christ-centrism is accentuated by the Mysteries’ role of means which Christ dwells Himself within man through, namely as sources of indispensable power for the ascetic efforts and in order to live the mysterious union with Christ, there will follow that the Orthodox spirituality has a pneumatological-churchly character. This is for where Christ is through Mysteries, there the Church is full of the Ghost of the communion with Christ, of the Church imparts Christ, as being His Body, through the mediation of the Mysteries. One cannot become or remain limb of Christ except he integrates himself and he becomes part of His mysterious Body – which is the Church – as a well ordered ensemble of many limbs.</p>	Church

	<p>The faith, as power of the spiritual growth, it come within man from Christ, but through Church, of through His body, which is full of the communion Ghost, by growing up from the faith of the churchly assembly, in which Christ is working through His Ghost. Through baptism, the man enters the bond with Christ, but he also enters the atmosphere of faith which animates as a divine power the churchly assembly. If not continuously animated and urged by the faith from the churchly assembly, nobody will be able to remain in faith and to grow up in faith and in faith's fruits. If somebody progresses in the virtues which grow up out of faith and which culminate in love, it means that he manifests his working love towards his fellow humans and that he strives for increasing the same faith in them; it means that he increases in the communion with all of them, in Christ, through the Ghost. But this is the same with working to strengthening the Church, out of a responsibility for the Church." (Stăniloae 1992: 44-45)</p>	
45-46	<p>"The responsibility for the Church was intentional when the Savior has given the hierarchical character of His Church. Dionysus the Areopagite connected to hierarchy the spiritual progress of the Church's members and he saw the Church's purpose in sustaining this progress. Of course, this responsibility will be purposeless if there isn't a gradation in the order of the things itself. There is primordially a hierarchy of the spiritual goods, and only for some people reach</p>	Angels

	<p>superior levels before others, they are responsible for helping the ones from the inferior levels to be elevated too. (...) The ones who have been elevated on the highest level of the spiritual goods they haven't been elevated there by themselves, for if that had been the case anyone could have elevated himself by himself and there wouldn't have been necessary a hierarchy and a connection between levels through the help the superior ones must grant to the inferior ones, and through the dependence of the inferior ones on the superior ones. That's why, the ones who are on the highest level within Church they have been elevated there by angels, beings who are superior to us. This highlights the role of the angels who, so, are responsible for the people – their fellows into creatural-ness. The angels are, at their turn, ordered on the nine levels. The Cherubs are on the highest level, they being in the most intimate closeness to God, and they receive the light directly from Him, and they cannot pass on a higher level. This establishing of the highest level it implies an establishing of all the angelic levels in the sense that there no longer takes place the passing from an inferior one on a superior one, but all of them eternally advance in knowledge. To angels there is no longer about a falling of one of them beneath, neither of some of them getting before others, for there is no sin. They are consolidated in good.” (Stăniloae 1992: 45)</p>	
45	“Each level receives the deifying light through the superior	Angels

	<p>level, and in this sense the angels need the superior levels. Otherwise, they are established forever on their levels. This may be their “resting”, though this resting doesn’t mean ceasing the eternal rejoicing for receiving the godlike light, of ceaselessly contemplating the infinite deeps of God. The angels are established in good, but they are progressing in it too. This means that the angels are “in an always noble resting” of their spirit, or in a circular movement exclusively around the divine Being, which our spirit will also reach to, in the future life. The believers, unlike the angels, they ascend from on a level on another and, because they have fallen into sin, this ascension means too, on one hand the gradual annulling of the sin’s consequences, and on the other hand, the consummation of the believers’ nature by as much as possible participating to God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 45)</p>	
45	<p>“In the service of the spiritual progress of the believers there stays the hierarchy of persons, for only the persons are capable, out of love, of helping other persons. That’s why the hierarchy is essential to the Church (the heavenly hierarchy somehow belongs to the Church too, and it upholds the ascendant movement of the churchly hierarchy). The man’s ascension it takes place by the help and in the frame of the Church. The ultimate target of the entire hierarchy is the deification of the ones who are saved.” (Stăniloae 1992: 45)</p>	Church
47	<p>“The work of the Church’s hierarchy upon the believer people, it is exercised, essentially, through the Holy Mysteries, and</p>	Holy Mysteries

	<p>especially through Baptism, Chrism, and Eucharist. While the angels, as “pure minds”, they receive the godlike things in an unveiled mode, , we receive the godlike things dressed up in “sensitive icons”, or “in symbols”; through symbols we understand words, gestures, and sensitive matters, which do not only signify but they also comprise in an not-understood manner some spiritual realities. These wraps cover, more or less, the “rationalities” of the Mysteries. The sensitive forms of the Mysteries do not impede the consummate ones to contemplate and to feel the Mysteries’ spiritual content, and to the not-consummate ones the Mysteries stay in a wise conformity to those ones’ state.” (Stăniloae 1992: 47)</p>	
47	<p>“The hierarchy of the three levels (deacon, priest, bishop, o. n.) whose has been entrusted the guiding of the believers, it is completed with a hierarchy of another order, unofficial, for some believers are on a higher level of participation to the divine goods than other believers, and the responsibility for the other it makes these advanced believers to help those to be elevated too. It is the hierarchy of the holiness, which doesn’t disregard nor impedes in its work the hierarchy based on the celebration of the Mysteries and imposed by the seen organization of the Church.” (Stăniloae 1992: 47)</p>	Holiness
47	<p>“Even the Christians who are on the highest levels of the holiness, they sip further their spiritual power from the Holy Mysteries and therefore they stay in respectful dependency on the hierarchy entrusted with the Mysteries’ celebration. The</p>	Laymen

	<p>ones who use the power of the grace for cleaning themselves of passions and for achieving the virtues, they achieve diverse charismas, as the lives of the saints and the lives of the spiritualized believers attest it. Thus, the three levels of the laymen (catechumens, believers, monks) are completed with the much more supple variety of the spiritual states of the Church's members. Today there aren't catechumens, and the penitents do not constitute anymore a separate category, so that the deacons wouldn't have a category reserved to them, identical to that of the ones who are being purified. The believers can no longer be reckoned that all of them are exclusively on the level of the illumination neither all the monks are exclusively on the level of the consummation. Many believers still are in the phase of purification and, likewise, many amongst monks still are on the two inferior levels. On the other hand, the purification, the illumination, and the consummation, in the radical and spiritual meaning these states do not make useless the impartation with the Holy Mysteries of the believers who are on those levels." (Stăniloae 1992: 47)</p>	
48	<p>"Within Church there is a more supple hierarchy, of inward and unofficial order, a hierarchy based exclusively on the holiness degrees. But this hierarchy too, it needs the Mysteries and it maintains itself in dependency on the seen hierarchy which is accredited to celebrate the Mysteries. No matter the level of holiness which a believer would be on, the</p>	Holy Mysteries

believer still remains dependent during his life on earth on the hierarchical order of the Church and he must be imparted with the Holy Mysteries. Of course, to the one on a higher level of holiness, the Mysteries are unveiled, he sees more of their content, he benefits more of them, so that even if the material wrap has become – to say so – inexistent to him, he receives the Mysteries further, for the spiritual content of the Mysteries it is nourished out of the infinite content of the godlike life and, as such, it is a necessary source of spiritual life to anybody. The angelic Liturgy from the Church's painting tells us that the Eucharist, even unseen, it still remain Eucharist, as Impartation, a "more true one", one fuller with the Body and with the Blood of the One Who has sacrificed Himself for the world. The godlike grace imparted through the Holy Mysteries they aren't confounded, still, amongst them, and that's why, even when the wraps of the Mysteries are more transparent to some people, they still need special grace, conform to their state, which constitute the essence of some precise Mysteries. There is a hierarchy of the grace, starting with the grace of the Baptism and to the grace which the Cherubs and the Seraphim are imparted with. Even the Christian who passes to heavens he still remains within Church, in the heavenly part of the Church, somewhere on a level of the endless grace. And as long as the believer is on earth, he must be within Church if he wants to thrive in the living of the union with God; and not only for he must remain

	in the hierarchical-sacramental structure of the Church, but also for he must progress in the direction of the heavenly hierarchy of the angels, towards the saints' Church from heavens, which isn't in discontinuity with the Church on earth, but in connection with this one. For, anyway, someone won't reach on the level of purely contemplating God if he hasn't purified himself through the Mystery of the Baptism, for instance. That one must take with him the consequences, the signs of the seen Mystery of the Baptism from the Church on earth." (Stăniloae 1992: 48)	
48-49	"The spiritual ascension, even if leads someone to the immediate closeness to God in heavens, it is an ascension within Church, on the spiritual levels from within the Church on earth, and on the levels from within the Church from heavens. There is no other ladder towards God, than through the interior of the Church! This is for along this ladder there is stretched full of attraction the grace of Christ, the power of Christ: namely of the "Way". And for in the highest end of this ladder and only there, as top of the entire hierarchy, there is Christ." (Stăniloae 1992: 48-49)	Church
49	"The churchly character of the spiritual life it is identified to the Church's Christ-centric character. Even the one who has been elevated to the state of "pure mind" and of "contemplation without symbols, he still hasn't left the hierarchical frame of the Church in broad sense, and he hasn't jumped beyond Jesus. This is for Jesus is the all-	Church

	divine and above existence mind. Christ stays on the top of any hierarchy as an attraction force, for anyone who ascends its levels.” (Stăniloae 1992: 49)	
49	“On a first glance, one could believe that the multitude of the hierarchical angelic and churchly levels, presented by Dionysus the Areopagite as mediators of the divine light, they would make impossible the believer’s direct communication with Christ. At a more attentive look, though, we notice that the power working on all levels of the hierarchy it is the godlike grace of Jesus Christ, or there He is Himself crossing through His hierarchical organs and working through them the Mysteries they celebrate. If the created persons can be one within another, all the more Christ can be within all persons.” (Stăniloae 1992: 49)	Grace
49	“The hierarchical levels do not replace Christ, but because of us not being able to see Him from the beginning and to understand Him in an unveiled manner, without the mediation of the symbols and without the explanation we are given by the hierarchical levels, He takes in account this weakness of ours and he communicates Himself, to us, through the hierarchical levels. But, on the measure we progress with the help of the angelic hierarchy and of the angels, we too see God and we feel God increasingly clearer, and we get increasingly closer to His unveiled light, namely we are being deified.” (Stăniloae 1992: 49)	Church
6. The Great Stages of the Spiritual Life		

50	<p>“The simplest division of the spiritual life is in: the practical phase or active, and the contemplative phase. The practical phase, the phase of the deeds, it is meant to elevate the being of the believer from the state submitted to the passions and to elevate him on the levels of the virtues to the love. The contemplative phase represents the gathering together of the believer’s being, his unity and simplicity, his focusing exclusively on God, the One and Infinite. The man from the practical phase is called <i>worker (working)</i>, and the one from the contemplative phase is called <i>onlooker, seer</i>. Often, instead of “contemplation” or of “contemplative” the Holy Fathers used the terms: “knowledge” and “knower” (Gnosis, Gnostic).” (Stăniloae 1992: 50)</p>	Gnosis
50	<p>“The purpose of the active phase is to liberate the man of passions. This is to the monk an accessible target, and not a utopian ideal. This state of dispassion is considered as equal to, or better said it is a benchmark of the love for God. And this spiritual love constitutes the crossing from the active phase to the contemplative phase.” (Stăniloae 1992: 50)</p>	Asceticism and Mysticism
50	<p>“Only that one who has cleaned his mind through dispassion is able to direct himself towards knowledge (Gnosis), or towards contemplation. Profane erudition can be achieved by the unclean ones too, but the contemplation is had only by the clean ones. And the cleanness or the dispassion we can achieve it only by working the commandments, this constituting the preoccupation of the active phase. Only the</p>	Asceticism and Mysticism

	<p>clean soul can be a mirror not-narrowed and undefiled by the passionate attaching to the world's things, capable of receiving the godlike knowledge. This mind is empty. Only this mind is in a state of contemplation, of existential knowledge. Once has reached this state of dispassion, or of cleanness, or of quietude, or of peace, or of serenity, the soul is elevated on the level of the contemplation or of the Gnosis. But the Holy Fathers strictly discern this Gnosis, or contemplation, from the spiritual knowledge of the world, which at its turn, is different from the profane knowledge, being knowledge through the godlike grace." (Stăniloae 1992: 50)</p>	
51	<p>"The division of the spiritual life in two phases it becomes a division in three phases: 1) the active phase or of the doing; 2) the phase of contemplating the nature; 3) the theological phase or of mysteriously contemplating God. It is important that in this scheme describing the progress towards consummation, it is mentioned absorbed also the knowledge about nature, about creation in its wholeness. Accepting the clean contemplation of the nature as act of spirituality, it is characteristic to the Eastern Holy Fathers. (...) The clean contemplation of the nature is a stage that reestablishes and that proves the restoration of the human soul's power of knowledge. But this scheme is ramifying even more. Inside the "natural contemplation" it can be discerned "the body's contemplation" and "the contemplation of the bodiless</p>	Asceticism and Mysticism

	beings”, or of the angels. Those we have three levels of the knowledge: of the corporeal world, of the incorporeal world, and of the Holy Trinity.” (Stăniloae 1992: 51)	
51-52	“The order of the spiritual ascension it is very clearly presented by Saint Maximos the Confessor. He too divides the ascension, firstly, in two levels. The spiritual man is elevated from virtues to knowledge or from doing to contemplation or from the active philosophy to the contemplative theology, or to the contemplative Mystagogy. Then he presented a division in three levels, as the contemplation following after doing it refers either to the rationalities from within beings or to God. In this threefold division the levels of the spiritual life are called as: 1. Doing; 2. Natural contemplation; 3. Mystical theology. These three levels are called also as: doing – natural contemplation – theological Mystagogy, or the active phase – the contemplative phase – the theological grace, or, virtue – spiritual contemplation – clean prayer. For the contemplation of the creation can refer to the seen or to the unseen world, Saint Maximos the Confessor sometimes presented a division in four levels.” (Stăniloae 1992: 51-52)	Asceticism and Mysticism
52	“Amongst the three levels of the spiritual life, the first one is the level of the beginner, who must strive to accustom himself to virtues. There are seven virtues. At their beginning there is the faith; at their end there is the love, which is preceded by dispassion. The love concentrates in itself all the virtues and it passes the man from knowledge to contemplation. The	Virtues

	target of the virtues or of the endeavors from the first stage is the liberation of passions or the dispassion. The virtues combat the passions and thus they indirectly serve the spirit constituting a level towards the ultimate goal, which is the knowledge.” (Stăniloae 1992: 52)	
52	“The second level is called contemplation, though Saint Maximos, as we have seen, he doesn’t use this unique word, but he gives it many meaning, according to the object of knowledge it refers to. By and large, though, this object of knowledge is almost always a creature. Only rarely, namely when Saint Maximos divides the ascension in two levels and not in three, he understand by it also the mysterious contemplation referring in an unmediated manner to God. But when he divides this ascension on three levels, the contemplation constituting the second level, this one almost always means the contemplation oriented towards creatures. In this meaning, the contemplation has as object the “rationalities” from within beings. Through it the man achieves a spiritual sight of the rationalities from within the created things; through it the nature is to the man a “pedagogue”, a guidebook towards God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 52)	Asceticism and Mysticism
52-53	“The third level, that one of the mysterious knowledge, it no longer occupy itself with the “rationalities” from within things, but with God Himself. Its object is the godhead: all-holy, and all-happy, supra-untold, supra-unknown, and above any infinity. This knowing of God is an ecstasy of the love, which	Asceticism and Mysticism

	persists unmoving in a focusing towards God. One obtains this knowledge in the state of deification of the man, or of man's union with God." (Stăniloae 1992: 52-53)	
53	"The purification's level categorically belongs to the ascetic toils, and the level of the consummation, or of the seeing, or of the deification and union, it represents the target of these toils. More difficult it is to situate, between these two levels, the level of the illumination." (Stăniloae 1992: 53)	Asceticism and Mysticism
53	"Instead of dividing our study in two parts, namely in that one of purifying and that one of mysteriously knowing God, we divide it in three, according to the three levels which we mentioned before. This is for, on one hand, the illumination's level belongs to the knowledge, for through it the soul has reached knowledge of God other than the natural knowledge, knowledge through the divine "rationalities" from within things, but not less knowledge limpidly and firmly related to God. Then this level is no longer a fight against passions, but it is something positive, which crowns the ascetic toils, resembling in this concern too, to the culminant phase of the spiritual life. But, on the other hand, the illumination's level belongs at its turn to the road towards the final target; the knowledge on this level is at its turn knowledge directed towards creatures and as such it must be overcome, in order one to reach the final target of directly knowing God. It is on one hand a positive result, obtained at the end of liberation of everything evil, but on the other hand it is neither the final	Asceticism and Mysticism

	<p>positive result, though it is a good result, and it is not the absolute good which the ascetic toils search for, but it is a result than must be overcome too. We can say that the illumination's level belongs both to the ascetic ascension and to the target of the ascetic ascension, or that on this level the mysterious knowledge meets the ascesis, or the understanding meets the effort of overcoming this understanding too. It is the encounter of the light of the Morningstar with the dawn, the first one being overwhelmed by the last one." (Stăniloae 1992: 53)</p>	
53	<p>"But let's now analyze in detail the ramifications of the three levels of the spiritual life. For the first level has as preoccupation the liberation of passions and to replace the passion for virtues, it is necessary to know firstly the being of the passions, their way of birth and of growing up. Then we must research the mode of overcoming the passions by becoming accustomed to the seven virtues, in the order presented by Saint Maximos the Confessor: of the faith, of the fear, of the restraint, of the patience, of the hope, of the dispassion, and of the love, to which are connected: the fasting, the taking of vigil, the prayer, the pious readings, and the enduring of troubles, as means for achieving the mentioned virtues." (Stăniloae 1992: 53)</p>	Asceticism and Mysticism
FIRST PART		
PURIFICATION		

A ABOUT PASSIONS		
1. THE ESSENCE OF THE PASIONS		
55	“The passions are the lowest level the human being can descend to. Both their Greek name – <i>πάθος</i> – and the Latin name – <i>passiones</i> , and also the Romanian <i>patimi</i> , they all show that the man is brought by passions to a state of passivity, of slavery. Actually, the passions overwhelm the man’s will, so that the passions’ man is no longer a will’s man, but they say about him that he is “mastered”, “enslaved”, “carries away” by passions.” (Stăniloae 1992: 55)	Passions
55	“Another characteristic of the passions is that in them is manifested a limitless thirst, searching for its quenching but not being able to find it. Blondel says that the passions represent the man’s thirst for infinite, turned towards a direction which it cannot find its satisfaction in. This thing is said by Dostoyevsky too.” (Stăniloae 1992: 55)	Passions
56	“What Nilus the Ascetic says about stomach, that it becomes through covetousness a sea that cannot be filled, it fits any passions.” (Stăniloae 1992: 56)	Passions
56	“This always unsatisfied infinity is due both to the passion <i>per se</i> and to the objects which the passions try to satisfy themselves with. The objects searched for the passion they cannot satisfy the passions, for the objects are finite and, as such, they do not correspond to the limitless thirst of the passions. Or, as Saint Maximos the Confessor says, the man	Passions

	<p>is in a continuous preoccupation with the nothing, because of trying to quench his infinite thirst with the nothing of his passions, since the objects which the passions swallow are being transformed in nothing, for being by their nature reducible to nothing. Actually, the passions, by its nature, it has to do only with objects and it searches for the objects only because these ones can be totally under the mastery of the <i>self</i>, namely at the <i>self</i> free will. But the objects are, by their nature, finite, both as sources of satisfaction and as duration, by easily passing into nonexistence, through consumption. Just when the passion need the human person too, in order the passion to be satisfied, it reduces the human person too, to the character of an object, or it sees and it uses from the human person only the object side, missing the person's indefinite depths hidden in the person's side as individual.” (Stăniloae 1992: 56)</p>	
56-57	<p>“The infinite thirst of the passions in itself, it can be explained by the fact that the human being, by having a spiritual basis, it has a tendency towards infinite which is manifested in passions too; but in passions this tendency is turned from the authentic infinite which is or spiritual order, towards world, which only give the illusion of the infinite. Without being himself infinite, the man not that is capable of, but he is even thirsty for infinite, and just for that the man is capable and thirsty of God, the true and the only infinite (<i>homo capax divini</i>). The man is thirsty for and capable of infinite not in the</p>	Passions

	<p>sense that the man could be able to achieve the infinite, or to absorb the infinite in his being – because if that had been the case the man’s being would have become infinite, or it would have been virtually infinite – but in the sense that he can and he must fuel himself spiritually from infinite and infinitely, by searching for and by being able to live in a communion with the infinite, in a participation to infinite. But the man didn’t want to be content with the participation to infinite, but he wanted to become himself the center of the infinite, or he believed that he is such a center, letting himself to be deceived by his nature’s thirst for infinite.” (Stăniloae 1992: 56-57)</p>	
57	<p>“By not understanding that the infinite thirst of his nature isn’t an indication of this nature’s infinity, for the true infinite has not thirst – but actually this thirst is a sign of his incapacity of communicating with the infinite which is characteristic to his nature – the human being, instead of being content to remain and to progress in the communication with the true infinite, he wanted to become himself the infinite, by trying to absorb in himself or to subordinate to himself everything that was appropriate to this relation of subordination to the human being, namely dead objects, or finite things. Instead of quenching his thirst of infinite – by searching the infinite as something different from him, due to his gravitational tendency towards a center whom to subordinate himself to – the man tried to gather all things</p>	Passions

around himself, as around a center. But by not being in himself a real center, this nature of his took revenge by making the man, in reality, to be actually the one to chase the material things, or even enslaving the man to the material things. This is because the passion, as relentless fleeing away after the world, instead of being an expression of the central sovereignty of our being, it is rather a force carrying us away without its will, it is the sing of our being's falling into a state of passiveness. Our nature, willy-nilly, it still must manifest its tendency towards a center from outside it. Through passions, this center has been moved from God to the world. Thus, the passions are the product of a tortuous impulse of the human nature, or of a human nature that has lost its simple and straight tendency; in it one meets two tendencies, or a tendency that cannot go to the end, but it turns against the human nature. The passion is a knot of contradictions. On one hand, the passion is the expression of egotism, by wanting to make all the things gravitating around itself; on the other hand, the passion denotes the world's transformation in an exclusive center of preoccupations. On one hand, the passion is a product of the will of egocentric sovereignty; on the other hand, the passion is a force lowering the man to the state of an object carried here and there without his will. On one hand, the passion searches for infinite; on the other hand, the passion gains the nothing." (Stăniloae 1992: 57)

57-58	<p>“The spirit, by being infinite and capable of being filled up with infinite and by being thirsty for receiving the infinite in itself, instead of searching for the bond with the infinite spirit, he tries to fill himself up with finite and passing objects, not gaining anything and his thirst remaining unquenched.” (Stăniloae 1992: 57-58)</p>	Passions
58	<p>“The passion is something irrational. Everything in the world is rational as Saint Maximos the Confessor said, because each thing has its basis in a divine rationality; only the passion is irrational. The supreme passion’s irrationality it is shown in the fact that, though the passionate man realizes increasingly more that the finite things cannot correspond to his aspiration for infinite, and this ascertainment fills him up with boredom and discouragement, the man still let himself to be carried away, on the next moment, by his egocentric passion, as he would absorb the infinite through that passions, not realizing that the true infinite it is a free spirit that cannot be absorbed without that spirit’s will, for it is a subject whom the man must enter the communion with, as freedom, with another freedom. For instance, the covetous knows that no food will even satisfy his greediness and the one who hates he feels that his fellow human whom he hates will never be able to satisfy his hatred’s fire, even if that one will be totally consumed by it. Rational would be that neither the covetous nor the one who hates to let themselves tormented by these passions. But none of them does that,</p>	Passions

	and they persist in their irrational torments.” (Stăniloae 1992: 58)	
58	“By their irrationality, by their deceiving character, by deviating the man from his true target, the passions keep the human being in a darkness of nescience. By fighting the passions, one aims to escape the human being of nescience, to turn the human being towards the true infinity of God, as target of his life, and to liberate his spirit from under the slavery of the world and from under the tyranny represented by passions. This is the meaning of the dispassion.” (Stăniloae 1992: 58)	Passions
58-59	“In the old spiritual literature, the passions are reckoned as being eight in number, or, when the vain glory is united with the pride, as being in number of seven. These are: the belly’s covetousness, the fornication, the love for money, the anger or the hatred, the sadness, the idleness, the vain glory, and the pride. They coincide, actually, to the seven capital sins: the covetousness, the licentiousness, the avarice, the anger, the envy, the laziness, and the pride, if we identify here the envy to the sadness.” (Stăniloae 1992: 58-59)	Passions
59	“Some of the passions belong to the body, others to the soul. But the tight unity between body and soul it makes the bodily passions to be intertwined with the soul’s passions or to reciprocally condition one another. The ascetic writers reckon that at the younger ones, the belly’s covetousness causes all the other passions. This is because of setting in movement	Passions

	<p>the fornication's lust and both these ones need money in order to be satisfied, and the one who sees himself deprived of the objects which satisfy this three passions he gets sad, like somebody would want to steal these from him, and so he gets angry. To the old ones the main passion is the pride. That's why, the vain glory and the pride can be a result of the greediness and of the wealth one has gathered. But the inverse case is possible too: due to his love for glory and due to his pride, the man searches for wealth in order to show his luxury for obtaining the people's praises and in order to be haughty to others; or he gets sad and angry when not being enough honored." (Stăniloae 1992: 59)</p>	
59	<p>"Just because of this interconditioning of the bodily passions - started from the belly's covetousness - with the soul's passions - started from pride -, it determined the same spiritual writers who declared the belly's covetousness the first passion, to declare then "the pride as the first calf of the devil". This is because of the possibility that somebody to be proud without stuffing himself with foods, as there are enough ascetics proud about their asceticism. One could say that there is a twofold circuit leading from the belly's covetousness to all the other passions - including the soul's ones - and from pride again to almost all the other passions, including the bodily ones. The belly's covetousness and the pride represent one and the same egocentric thirds of the man, in the twofold aspect of the man's psychic-physical</p>	Passions

	being. There is a tight interconditioning between biological and spiritual, one of these domains influencing the other one both in the falling and in the man's restoration. Here we have a vast research field concerning the details of the interdependency between biological and spiritual." (Stăniloae 1992: 59)	
59-60	"Both the covetousness and the pride have their roots in the φιλαυτία = egotistic love for the self, as an autonomous and independent absolute. "It is clear, says Saint Maximos the Confessor, that the one who possesses the egotism he possesses all the passions" (Head about Love, III, 8; G.P. 90, 1020 B). And the egotism represents a breaking with God as a centre differing from myself, of my existence; and, for the man cannot exist by himself, no matter how much he would have this illusion, he gravitates towards the world." (Stăniloae 1992: 59-60)	Passions
60	"So, the forgetfulness of God being the ultimate cause of the passions, the healing from passions must start from faith, namely from the man's coming back to an as often as possible remembrance of God. By this, there will be put the first brake to the egotism, a fact that will manifest, actually, as restraint in a broad sense: the restraining of the bodily lusts and the restraint of the pride, through humbleness." (Stăniloae 1992: 60)	Passions
60	"By subordinating the spirit of our being to the inferior impulses, but by not succeeding to totally reduce our spirit to	Passions

	<p>silence, the passions cause a tearing apart and a disorder in our being and, by this, they cause a weakening of the being. But the passions do not have this effect only upon their subject, because of causing disorder in the relations too, which their subject has with his fellow humans. Often, the passion stretches from its subject towards someone else's life. One's greediness causes another's greediness, as the last one's defense against the first one's greediness. Almost any passion attempts to reduce the fellow human to the inferior level of some objects. But those ones try to defend themselves, and out of this defense it is born a fight, which often is not limited only to the simple defense, but it goes at its turn up to treating the first one as an object. The egotism and the narrowing of the subject of the passions awaken, through defense and rebellion, the egotism, the narrowing, and the depravation of the others. The passions have as their victims not only their subject but also his fellow humans. The passion doesn't manifest its effect of weakening, of desolation, and of disorder only within the passionate man, but also in his fellow humans. The passion strikes those ones too, and they often react in the same way. The fornicator uses other persons as objects of his pleasures, but by this he determines those ones to become fornicators and trying at their turn to use other persons too, as objects." (Stăniloae 1992: 60)</p>	
60	<p>"The pride one arises by imitation, or as reaction, the pride in other persons; and the relations of pride arose thus amongst</p>	Passions

	persons, they are contrary to the normal relations in harmony; the human community it crumbles. Its members eat on each other as the reptiles do, said Saint Maximos the Confessor (<i>Epistle II towards John Cubicula</i> , G.P. 91, 396). All the passions are the opposite of the true love, the true love being the only one to reestablish the normal harmony amongst people.” (Stăniloae 1992: 60)	
60	“The passions cause and maintain the chaos amongst people. That’s why Christ, by founding His Church, he aims through it the reestablishing of the human unity or togetherness. But such a restoration isn’t possible without weakening the people’s passions.” (Stăniloae 1992: 60)	Passions
60-61	“A method for cleaning the passions is to restrain from passions – of the one who used to be the passions’ prime subject in relations with his fellow humans – and the others to avoid answering him through their passions, by enduring and by persevering in loving the ones who behave towards him in a passionate manner. This shelters them not only from contamination with passions, but it also has a healing effect upon those ones who want to make them the victims of their passions, as it also stops the accentuated deterioration of the relations amongst the members of the human community. That’s why Jesus commanded us not to answer evil to evil, but to love even our enemies. Saint Isaac the Syrian says: “Do not make difference between the worthy and unworthy, but consider all of them equally good, for in this way you will be	Passions

	able to attracts the unworthy ones too, to good” (Word 23). Or: “Force yourself, when you meet your fellow human, to honor him above his measure. Kiss his hands and his feet, and keep his hands on your eyes, and praise him for the things he doesn’t have”. “By this, and through things like this, you attract them to good”. (Word 6). Unlike the love that bonds the people, the passions disintegrate the bonds amongst people. The passions are the ferment of the inward and interpersonal disorder. They are the thickened wall we place between us and God, the mist set on our nature’s transparence to God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 60-61)	
2. Passions and Affects		
61	“The possibility of the passions’ birth is given by the existence of the natural affects. “The condemnable and contrary to nature passions, which depend on us – says Saint Maximos the Confessor – they do not have their source within us otherwise than in the movement of the affects conform to nature” (<i>Quaest. Ad Thalass.</i> , q. 55; G.P. 90, 541).” (Stăniloae 1992: 61)	Passions
61	“Which are these affects conform to the nature and how occurred them within our nature? The affects are called by Saint Maximos the Confessor as passions (πάθη) too, because of representing at their turn a trait of passiveness of our nature. And we can say that they represent an even fuller passiveness than the passions which are opposite to nature. This is because to the birth and to the growing up o the last	Affects

	<p>ones, our will contributed in some measure too, even if the passions totally dominate us after. In this sense, the passions depended on us to be born and to grow up and - in some extent - it depends on us to liberate ourselves from them. But the affects conform to nature do not depend at all on us. That's why we have said that they manifest in an even more accentuated mode the passiveness of our nature. And because of that too, they totally depend on nature and by no means on will, not being, therefore, condemnable. Such affects are: the lust for food, the pleasure caused by food, the fear, and the sadness. Even more than that, these affects are necessary to our being, for helping to preserve it." (Stăniloae 1992: 61)</p>	
62	<p>"The affects, though, they didn't belong to the original constitution of the nature, not being created in the same time with it. The affects penetrated the less rational part of the nature, accentuating its irrational traits, after the falling weakened the rationality, the spirit." (Stăniloae 1992: 62)</p>	Affects
62	<p>"The affects represent, in other words, the aspect of animality of our nature, accentuated after the falling off the spiritual paradisiacal life, a life that was united with God. In this animal trait of theirs, it stays both their inferiority and their innocence. This is for, as the animals are innocent for their instinctual manifestations of their organism, likewise is the man, as long as these affects remain within their borders, serving the biological existence. But, by the fact that the man</p>	Affects

	is spirit too, and therefore he has an irreducible aspiration towards infinite, he can associate this aspiration of his to the biological affects, transforming these affects in passions, namely in exaggerated affects, crossed through by an infinite thirst to be satisfied. Out of animal traits, they become diabolical traits, through the spiritual element.” (Stăniloae 1992: 62)	
62	“We said that the affects aren’t condemnable in themselves, conforming ourselves to an expression of Saint Maximos the Confessor. But we must specify that to man the affects never are in a state of total moral indifference, due to the spiritual reflection upon them, which, either it maintains them inside the margins which make them useful to the nature, or it pours in them infinite tendencies. Only if the affects are kept within these margins by the man’s will, they will be innocent. But when the affects deviate from this condition, towards a side or another, they become evil (passions), or good, according to how the man ties himself through them exclusively to the world, or inversely, on how the man tends towards God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 62)	Affects
62-63	“Like the affects can become passions, likewise they can become good impulses, accordingly to how the man’s thirst for infinite as spiritual being it is oriented towards world, or towards God. The affects become good also when maintained in their necessary biological function, namely within the margins necessary for preserving the body, through the	Affects

	<p>thought of God. Of course, in such a case they aren't equally good as in the case of being directed exclusively towards God. The asceticism mustn't fight for abolishing them, but it neither just become disinterested in them, because of otherwise they easily can become passions; the asceticism must constantly supervise them, keeping them under control. By this the man is being strengthened in his spiritual side, disciplining himself on a daily basis, "God establishing in this way that the man to come to the awareness of his greatness of rational being" (<i>Quaest. Ad Thalas.</i>, q. 1; G.P. 90, 269). The affects are a poison to the nature, but a poison that can heal us of the venomous bite of the evil one (<i>ibid.</i>)." (Stăniloae 1992: 62-63)</p>	
63	<p>"Not being a part of the nature, by definition, the affects aren't destined to cross, together with our nature, in the future life. There we are going to be "pure minds", in the sense of subjects preoccupied only with understanding and with spiritual love, as the angels are. "This is for the affects which preserve the life here won't be moved together with us in the immortal and eternal life" (<i>Quaest. Ad Thalas.</i>, q. 55; G.P. 90, 541). We are going to be "pure minds" as we have been created too, the good understanding and the clean spiritual joy constituting the characteristic life of our being." (Stăniloae 1992: 63)</p>	Affects
63	<p>"The proof that we are in essence pure understanding and spiritual life, it determined Saint Maximos the Confessor to consider that the bodily affectivity doesn't belong to our being;</p>	Affects

	<p>on the other hand, the evidence of the impossibility of preserving our life on earth while we are chocking our affects, it determined him to necessarily connect the affects to the nature, in the nature's existence on earth, finding the solution that the affects occurred after falling, but they aren't condemnable. Namely, the bodily affectivity, connected to our present state, it is something inferior in report with our nature, but it still is something necessary in its present existence on earth." (Stăniloae 1992: 63)</p>	
63-64	<p>"This element of bodily affectivity growing out of the biological side, it isn't condemnable and we mustn't fight against it, for it constitutes the basis of our growth in the spiritual life. Saint Maximos the Confessor, in the assent of the entire Eastern cogitation, he isn't an adversary to the biological life. The ascesis means, in the Eastern cogitation spirit's, restraining and disciplining the biological, and it isn't a fight for exterminating the biological. Even more, the ascesis means the "sublimation" of this element of bodily affection, and not its abolishment. The Christendom doesn't save some part of the person's being, but it saves the man in his wholeness. The power manifested in these affects it is attracted at its turn to serve the man in his ascension towards God. The affects can receive a spiritual trait and they can give an increased accent to our love for God. God starts to be seen through them too. The affects become transparent for God and for the mind searching for God." (Stăniloae 1992: 63-</p>	Affects

	64)	
64	<p>“By putting bridle and measure to the pleasure for the material things, there is accomplished a transfer of the bodily affection’s energy of our being, in spirit’s favor, increasing the pleasure for the spiritual goods. The biological pleasure, by the measure we impose to it, it becomes innocent; and the great plus which has been stopped from manifesting on physiological plan it has been transfigured on spiritual plan. So than instead of saying that these affects cease to exist at our passing from this world, and we may better say that their energy is totally transferred in the favor of the spirit. And this might explain their apparition in the nature after the falling into sin, as a transfer of the spiritual energy on the inferior biological plan. Our being’s pleasure for the connection with something else it turned then from God and from our fellow human’s souls, towards world, and to it caused to grow up the pleasures related to the world. For it is hard to conceive that the force of these affects came from somewhere outside.” (Stăniloae 1992: 64)</p>	Pleasure
65	<p>“For the tendency of the man is directed towards the sensitive things, it has been stirred up within his body the pleasure of them. This has been done in the detriment of the mental activity, which has been considerably reduced together with the pleasure related to it. The man has placed the whole his energy towards the pleasure related to the things submitted to senses, by giving the pleasure related to them the highest</p>	Pleasure

	<p>intensity. Once stirred up, the affection of the sensitiveness it cannot be totally removed from man during his life on earth. But it can be limited, and it can be partially kept oriented towards the spirit's goods and towards the eternal good. Just through a part of it, through pain – which always follows to the pleasure –, the man can always learn to resist the pleasure. Unfortunately, the man does the opposite: the pain that follows to the pleasure, instead of determining the man to avoid the pleasure as source of it (what unitary the tree of experiencing the good and the bad is like!) it pushes the man again in pleasure in order to get rid of pain, and the man becomes increasingly more enchained in this vicious circle.” (Stăniloae 1992: 65)</p>	
65-66	<p>“If we look at the things more attentively, we will see that the pride, in the last analysis, even that one that doesn't grow up consequently to the sensitive goods, it still is occasioned by some skills related to the world and it is possible by the fact that the man takes in account his fellow human, whom he reckons himself as superior to. If the man had been aware of his absolute loneliness - or if he had been aware of staying in front of God -, the pride wouldn't have been possible in him. Somehow, the pride is also a victory of the world upon man, a victory of the feeling, as superficial perceiving of the world upon mind, the mind that sees God just through the world, and beyond world. One would even say that in the fallen angels too, though missing a body, the pride has been born</p>	Sin

	by the fact that they looked at the man's created world which they felt themselves superior to. The energy which they were trying to enrich themselves with from God, it has become energy which they tried to enrich themselves though, by mastering upon others who were inferior to them. And the anger which is being developed in an affect that sticks the man too much to the world, it too has its source in the feeling that has got out from the mind's control." (Stăniloae 1992: 65-66)	
3. The Ultimate Causes of the Passions and of the Affects		
66	"In the interpretation given by Saint Maximos the Confessor to the two trees from Paradise, he indicates also the primordial and forever causes of the passions. Because the passion is in its being a turning of the man's infinite aspiration toward another target than the natural one, towards the world which narrows the man and it makes him egotist, and not towards God, Who widens the man and makes him good, the question is: how it is possible the man to maintain himself in this wrong orientation, by swelling the affects above the necessary measure? When answering that the cause of the falling was the pride it isn't answered the question about the prime cause of the evil, for the pride is already an evil, a passion." (Stăniloae 1992: 66)	Passions
66-67	"Trying to penetrate this mysterious land which the first sinful movement of the human being was born in, and where this sinful movement has permanently its engine, Saint	Passions

	<p>Maximos insists upon an influence of the satanic ghost, which threw a breeze of confusion in the man's mind. Under its temptation, the man had a short darkening of his intelligence, by forgetting what his true cause is, and therefore his target too, so that the man turned his desire towards the world. This short deceit has been eased by the attraction exercised by the beautiful forms and the sweet promises of the world upon the man's senses. The world was here, in the immediate closeness, with all its callings and promises; God was here too, but he was harder to be noticed and promising more spiritualized and farer joys. One must search for the first causes of the passions in the deceiving influence of the evil ghost and in the man's sensitiveness. A first weakening of the mind's understanding work caused, on the other side of the scales, an intensification of the senses. Better said, this attracted from the man all the necessary energy the man had to put it in activating his mind, in the sense of the transposition which we are talking about. Or the mind has put itself in the service of the senses, "it had mixed itself in feeling", by preoccupying itself with highlighting all the voluptuous aspects of the seen world, "accomplishing a composed and leading to perdition knowledge of the sensitive things, a producing of passion one" (Saint Maximos the Confessor, <i>Quaest. Ad Thalas.</i>, G.P. 90, 255)." (Stăniloae 1992: 66-67)</p>	
67	"The mind has forgotten its own purpose, namely that of	Passions

	<p>knowing the One Whom the mind is related to, Who is at His turn persona Spirit able to fill up the mind's infinite longing for knowledge with His infinity, and the mind has entered in a foreign service, inferior to the mind, which cannot satisfy the mind's thirst for infinite." (Stăniloae 1992: 67)</p>	
67	<p>"We said that the world has attracted the feeling too, and through feeling the world has attracted the mind too, through its sensitive, sweet promises. This is because of the feeling in the meaning of work of perception of the senses it is always accompanied by a sensation of pleasure or of pain, which are more or less intense, in noticing the world's things. The senses' work, of perceiving, it is even capable of noticing in advance the pleasures and the pains which the things can provide. Besides, seeing the things is in itself accompanied by a pleasure or by a pain, even before possessing them." (Stăniloae 1992: 66-67)</p>	Pleasure / Pain
67	<p>"Consequently, the feeling has a twofold content and a twofold meaning: one is gnosiological and another is affective. This feeling's quality of noticing, through perception, the pleasure which the things can or of experiencing in perceiving the things a sensation of pleasure, it makes the feeling dangerous to the man. Or, by this quality of the feeling, the world becomes dangerous, because of being obvious that, between pleasure and pain, if let on his own, without being led by rationality, the feeling will always choose the pleasure. And in pleasure it stays the feeling's force, a force making often the</p>	Pleasure / Pain

	<p>rationality, as force of judgment, to concede, and the mind as knowledge function, to put itself in the service of the feeling.” (Stăniloae 1992: 67)</p>	
67-68	<p>“Three are the factors which cause the passions within man: a) the mind weakened in its autonomous and own work; b) the sensual perception which has become preponderant, and exited the mind’s subordination, and it has even attracted the mind under its command; c) an exclusive and irrational rush for pleasure – until that provided by the fellow humans’ praises – an concomitantly to it, a fearful running away from pain. These three causes are so much intertwined, than in each one are involved the other two either.” (Stăniloae 1992: 67-68)</p>	Passions
68	<p>“The passions represent a quantitative and hierarchical preponderance of the senses upon the man’s spirit. If the affects represent a sensitiveness kept under control by the spirit, the passions are a overflowing of the sensitiveness, over any measure. Thus, if the affects are a minimum of passiveness, but this necessary minimum is imposed by nature and it no longer depends on our will, the passions are an increase of passiveness over what is necessary, over what is imposed by the nature’s necessities, namely beyond a non-mandatory concession of our will, meaning a slavery caused willingly.” (Stăniloae 1992: 68)</p>	Passions

68	<p>“The affects are those “passions according to the nature’, for they serve to the nature’s preservation. The passions are contrary to nature, because they are not necessary to the nature, and because they even represent a damaging orientation of the nature and a toppling over of the hierarchy from within man.” (Stăniloae 1992: 68)</p>	Passions
68-69	<p>“The pleasures joined with what each limb necessarily does, they aren’t guilty. But are guilty the pleasures searched for through unnecessary deeds. It is guilty the plus or the senses’ deviation in order to search for the pleasure at all costs. Just because of that, the passions lead the nature to disorder, to the body’s weakening and decomposition, due to the weakening of the spirit that was keeping it in order. And the feeling of the weakening drives the man increasingly further, in his impulse of restoring his power out of a source that is incapable of strengthening him. Truly, what drives the man to rolling down on the passions’ slope it is a hidden fear of death. The boredom following to each pleasure it is like a void foretelling about death. Even more than that, God has tied right on the pleasure, a pain, in order the man when experiencing this pain to not longer search for pleasure. But the man, reached in pain, and carries away by the fear of the death announced to him by that pain, as a punishment for the pleasures which he will be searching for, he throws himself in new pleasures, leading his nature towards death.</p>	Pleasure / Pain

	(...) The tight connection between pleasure and pain it can be explained by the fact that the tension which the nerves are put in when feeling the pleasure, it is followed by a weakening, by an exhaustion. And by repeating the voluptuousness states quickens the body's death. By wrongly searching through passion a strengthening of the body's nature, the man rather weakens it, driving it to death even quicker." (Stăniloae 1992: 68-69)	
69	"It is graver the soul's death caused by passionately oscillating and advancing in the vicious circle formed by pleasure and pain. And we encounter here another contradiction of the passions. This is because they are an alternation, if not an intertwining of addiction and platitude, of effervescence and boredom, of tension and dryness; they are the tormenting death, the living death, and not the death giving the resting to the being. The man's life of platitude and of banal superficiality, which the spirit has succumbed in, it seems not coming to an end in this life, and it is endless in the future life, actually, providing the man some sort of infinity which he didn't desired, but an infinity in platitudes." (Stăniloae 1992: 69)	Pleasure / Pain
69	"The passions cause the nature's disorder also by the tearing apart they bring it within nature. I mentioned the words of Saint Maximos the Confessor, that the mind, by putting its activity in the service of the senses, it accomplishes "a composed and leading to perdition knowledge of the sensitive	Passions

things”. The feeling isn’t preoccupied with searching for the connections amongst the seen things’ rationalities, or even with looking at a thing in its unitary integrity, as fully framed in its own rationality; but the feeling limits its interest to a partial aspect, being attracted by the pleasure that aspect promises to it. The feeling doesn’t work in a broad horizon, but on each time it sees only one aspect, forgetting about all the other aspects. The consequence is obvious. Thus, through the feeling led by pleasure the world is crumbled in countless aspects, without connection amongst them, each one tied too strongly only to the feeling which notices it momentarily. By this, the feeling contributes to disorganizing the world itself. The mind that serves the feeling it focuses at its turn on the diverse singular aspects, not being preoccupied with the connections amongst those aspects. Instead of seeing the unitary system of the rationalities crossing throughout the world, and instead on seeing through this system the One God, in order the mind to remain at its turn always, in a conscious manner, one and the same, the mind forgets on each moment what it has known before, crumbling itself in acts of knowledge without connection amongst them, because of receiving on each moment the template of a thing isolated from the other things. This is the scattering of the mind, out of which the so-called “guarding the mind” must escape the mind from, and which is recommended by the Christian asceticism.” (Stăniloae 1992: 69-70)

70	<p>“The momentary exclusive and passionate focusing on a isolated aspect of the world, it makes the whole man’s being to focus on that in his greediness for tasting that thing; thus, the entire man’s nature crosses from instance to instant, through alternative passions: from anger to sadness; from disgust for people to avidly searching for their company, not being able to keep in a balance and in a temperance his diverse impulses. But this means tearing the nature apart; this is because instead of being always maintained in the equilibrium of its functions, the mind is let, one by one, as prey to the extremes contradicting amongst themselves because of their exaggerated exclusivism. The man is no longer a unitary being, the same on all his life’s moments. Forgetting about God it has a consequence forgetting about himself, as permanent unity of the own person. But the tearing apart stretches also on the plan of the inter-human relations. This is because of pursuing the pleasure and wanting to infinitely having access to the objects which provide us with the pleasure, we end up being in conflicts with the people or to stir up their envy.” (Stăniloae 1992: 70)</p>	Passions
70-71	<p>“It is enough to remember that who says “me” too often, in order to highlight that he has accomplished some things, and not somebody else, he actually end up cutting off his connections with his fellow humans. Not having love for other he won’t benefit of others’ love. His pride has cut his nature off from others’ nature, which, even borne by several subjects,</p>	Love

	<p>it still is one in its seen and unseen communications, and only thus its strength is being maintained and it is growing up, ceaselessly being enriched. Actually, the complete cutting off of the nature between individuals cannot ever take place. This would mean total death to them. If still is maintained, even in the most egotistic individual, though in a tormented form, it is due to the fact that his nature still remain in some connections, be it crooked ones, with others. This is for, in reality, there isn't a thing that somebody could do it by himself, even if apparently nobody has helped him. The idea of that deed, the incentive towards it, the skillfulness required for it, and so many other conditions of it, he has been given with from the environment which he has grown up in. Each one should say regarding everything he has been able to do: "we" have done it, and not for calling himself at plural, but in order to admit the others' contribution to any of his own feat. "Me" is an expression of the pride, indicating a dangerous cutting off of the nature. "We" is the expression of the love, of the humbleness, or recognizing the nature's unity and the synodality of the subjects, founded on this unity of the nature. That's why Saint Maximos the Confessor said that only the love removes the tearing apart from within the human nature" (<i>Epistle II towards John Cubicula</i>; G.P. 91, 396)." (Stăniloae 1992: 70-71)</p>	
4. The Passions and the Soul's Faculties		
71	"The Holy Fathers borrowed the conception upon the soul	Soul

	<p>mostly from Aristotle, who is not different from Plato's to, except by that that he refuses the preexistence of the mind (<i>νοῦς</i>), or of the spirit, and therefore its separation from soul. According to this conception, the soul – though one in essence, it has three main faculties: the <i>mind</i>, as potentiality of all the acts of knowing and thinking; the <i>lust</i> as potentiality of all the desires and lusts: and the <i>irascible</i> potentiality, impulsive, of the courage acts, of manhood, of good or bad anger. The rationality would be a function of the mind. When the rationality is considered in the place of the mind, the soul still has three powers: the rationality, the lust, and the impulsiveness." (Stăniloae 1992: 71)</p>	
71	<p>"We must notice that, even if the Holy Fathers reject the platonic idea of separation between mind and soul, as passionate and lusting whole, namely the idea of the mind's preexistence, though they consider that the two powers are kindred to each other and they differ from the mind in such a measure that, the Holy Fathers spoke, on the other hand, about two parts of the soul: the mental part, or spiritual, or rational, and the irrational part which comprises, together with other vital functions, the faculties of the pride and of the lust." (Stăniloae 1992: 71)</p>	Soul
72	<p>"The Holy Fathers adhered in some measure to the platonic thesis about the <i>νοῦς</i>'s immortality and about the immortality of the other two powers, by the fact that, according to them, as we exemplified before by quoting some places from Saint</p>	Soul

	Maximos the Confessor, only <i>vouç</i> is destined to the eternal life, the anger and the lust as headquarters of the affect having to cease at the end of the life on earth.” (Stăniloae 1992: 72)	
72	“But the mind, far from being different from the soul, it is the soul itself. The anger and the lust are powers accompanying the mind during the life on earth, a life born out of the association between soul and body. They are functions characteristic to the care for the body, and they are influenced by the mind’s connection with the body. Of course, they do not exclusively belong to the body, because of the body being in itself inert. They represent energy of the soul, oriented towards the body, and colored by the cohabitation with the body. The energy of the desire and of the manhood the soul has them in itself, and the soul will have them also after the life from here. The ones ceasing then they will be the lust and the anger, as we know them on earth, in their bodily and irrational element. The energy from them, spiritualized, it will be exclusively oriented towards God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 72)	Soul
72	“Understood as soul himself, the mind (<i>vouç</i>), or the soul himself, related to whom the lust and the anger have an external position, the mind is, at its turn, threefold. Kallistos the Katafygiote considers the soul as being mind, rationality, and ghost, in the likeness of the Holy Trinity. This threefold aspect doesn’t diminish the soul’s simplicity by any means.” (Stăniloae 1992: 72)	Soul

72-73	<p>“The conception about the soul is of a paramount importance, helping us to understand a multitude of things related to the mysterious life of the soul. According to Saint Mark the Ascetic, Christ places Himself, at Baptism, in our heart’s altar, or in the most inner part of our being, and we do not realize this aspect from the beginning, but we become aware of this by gradually changing ourselves. The same thing was said by Diadochus of Photice, according to whom, since the moment of the Baptism, the grace “hides in the deep of the mind”, Satan being cast outside and from now on influencing us through the body’s senses and through the irrational lusts’ sweetness. From here it comes that there is a deep or an interior of our mind unknown by us, but which we will gradually become aware of, if we strive to clean up our life. This deep is called by Mark the Ascetic as “heart”. This teaching allows us to establish connection bridges between the Christian teaching and the modern psychology, although the Christian doctrine comprises something that is a completion of this psychology. Most of the modern psychology, it admits the existence of a subconscious in order to reserve a space where the memories would be stored, and where are born the ideas, the inspiration, the intuitions, and the tendencies.” (Stăniloae 1992: 72-73)</p>	Soul
73	<p>“As one can see, the Christendom admits the existence of a soul’s region that doesn’t fall under the light of the conscience. Although, the term of <i>subconscious</i> isn’t</p>	<p>Soul</p> <p>A Christian approach and development of the Freudian psychoanalysis.</p>

	<p>appropriate to indicate this region, both because of the particle “sub” places it in an inferior, subordinated area, and because of being loaded with the Freudian heredity too, of so many too shameful to be confessed thoughts, which the conscience keeps repulsing, because of being ashamed to unveil them. By admitting that there is also a subconscious for the dark load we carry within us, we reckon as more appropriate for naming the region where the virtual energies of the human soul are virtually comprised, and through which the divine energies enter the soul, to use the term of <i>trans-conscious</i>, or of <i>supra-conscious</i>. The subconscious would be so the pantry to the left, or the dark dungeon of the conscience, where our evil deeds have been gathered, and it would be the place where the lust and the anger start from. And the trans-conscious or the supra-conscious would be the pantry to the right, or the upper room, where are stored and where work the superior energies, ready to flood our conscious life and even the subconscious, with their cleaning force, when we offer them the necessary conditions.” (Stăniloae 1992: 73)</p>	
73-74	<p>“Thus, the soul’s “ghost” it would be the highest part, or the most inner part, for in the soul’s order what is higher, it is more inwardly, more intimate. We think the term “heart” refers to this part too. For instance, Diadochus of Photice used, for the intimate place from within soul, where the grace hides since Baptism, alternatively, the expression “the mind’s</p>	Soul

	deep”, the word “heart”, and the word “ghost”. (Stăniloae 1992: 73-74)	
74-75	<p>“Amongst the three aspects of the soul, the most unveiled to us it is the rationality, this one seemingly having the role of revealing like, related to the Holy Trinity, this role it belongs to the divine Logos. The mind, with its more direct possibilities of knowing, namely of knowing the spiritual things, it is less unveiled to us. Almost totally it is unveiled to us the “ghost” or the “heart”, for the “ghost” lives in our deeps, as the Holy Ghost lives in the deeps of the godhead (I Cor. 2: 11). Like the Holy Ghost, our ghost descends in the conscious and subconscious regions of our surface life, of contact with the seen world, only after he has prepared our rationality for receiving Him. Our “heart” is locked up while we live a life of callousness and of sin. About such a man they say that he is “not having a heart”, or that “he has a stone heart”, namely in state of not-working. And the life “into ghost” is totally absent to this man. This man doesn’t have except a “rationality” lacking any depth. Our “heart” is being opened to us, is being widened by the hope in God, as said Mark the Ascetic. Otherwise, our heart is narrowed, locked up with cares. And “the life in ghost”, the “knowing of Christ into ghost”, expressions used by Maximos the Confessor, it means knowing Christ as dwelling within us, in our central intimacy. They say also that the “ghost” or the “spiritual life” it means the union between our self and the godlike Ghost, letting us</p>	<p>Soul</p> <p>A Christian approach and development of the Freudian psychoanalysis.</p>

	<p>the impression that we wouldn't have in this sense any region of the soul called "ghost", before encountering God. But we have a "ghost" within us, as a region where the Holy Ghost will settle in, but until Christ or the Holy Ghost do not dwell there it is a simple virtuality, and after that firstly is unknown to us and we gradually become aware of that on the measure we advance in virtues and, by this, we advance in the conscience of having Jesus within us. Only after that we grow up consciously in a spiritual life. This is in the same time a heart's life, for the life is the power of love; it is the soul open towards God and towards the fellow humans; and the life in ghost is a life of love for God and for our fellow humans, for the Ghost is, in the Holy Trinity too, always love. Through this openness, the soul actualizes, in the same time his connection with the infinite, his potentiality of communicating with the infinite, of receiving the infinite within himself, of uniting himself with the infinite. By descending the Holy Ghost within us, and by collaborating to achieving the virtues, as openness toward God and towards our fellow humans, our ghost is being "lit up" too, it is being thawed, our heart is being mellowed, and our soul's walls become transparent to God. The love of God awakens our love; God's penetration within us makes us to open ourselves to God." (Stăniloae 1992: 74-75)</p>	
75	<p>"The heart, or the loving state of the soul, it has in the Orthodox Christendom a gnosiological function too, and the</p>	Soul

	<p>true understanding of the mind is in the same time love for the understanding's object or subject. "Ghost" is an aspect and <i>vouç</i> is another aspect, of the same simple soul. The "ghost" or the "heart" comprises the "mind" in himself, or "the understanding" and the "rationality", like the Holy Ghost comprises the Father and the Son. Also, the "understanding" comprises in itself the "heart", or the "love" and the "rationality", and the "rationality" comprises the "understanding" and the "love". (Stăniloae 1992: 75)</p>	
75	<p>"One could say that the psychic energies of the lust and of the anger are involved in the energy that is in the upper room of the soul, in the "ghost" or in his "heart", and the more diminished is the life of the "heart", or of the "ghost", or the less those ones use their energy, the more increased is the energy of the bodily lust and anger." (Stăniloae 1992: 75)</p>	Soul
75	<p>"Let's see what is the mode like, which the passions are a distributed the passion on the mental faculties (understanding also the rationality and the heart or the ghost), on lust, and on anger, or what those ones are altered like, when God is ignored, or even when the certitude about God's existence it weakens, or when he even is forgotten. We are mentioning here that this ignoring, or doubt, or forgetfulness, it is cause on one hand by the deceit of the evil ghost which, because of being a ghost spending his energy in self-preoccupation, he urges or influences our soul to be preoccupied with ourselves; on the other hand, this</p>	Passions

	forgetfulness about God is cause to us by laziness, by a carelessness of the cogitation, which are influenced by an idleness of our body too.” (Stăniloae 1992: 75)	
75-76	“Ignoring God it has a moral character too (better said, an immoral one), so that the moral and the intellectual causes are intertwined. (...) The passions are, therefore, the effect and, at their turn, the cause of a mind deprived of the true understanding, of an irrationality and of a locking up of the ghost, or of the heart, or of the love.” (Stăniloae 1992: 75-76)	Passions
76	“If the passion, on the mind’s side, they indicate a minus of activity, an abdication of the mind from its role of leading, on the lust and anger side, the passions indicate a crossing over a measure, an overflowing over the nature’s normal margins. Even the idleness is tied to a pleasure. On the other hand, right this minus of the mind and of its effort and the plus of the lust and of the anger, it means a trespassing of the nature’s laws, not to mention their orientation towards wrong, narrowed objectives, incapable to answer the mind’s thirst for infinite, to put and to keep the “ghost”, or the “heart” in movement.” (Stăniloae 1992: 76)	Passions
76	“We ascertained that the second and the third causes of the passions are the preponderance of the senses’ work and of the preoccupations with the pleasure, concomitantly to avoiding the pain. But the soul’s power wanting the pleasure it is the lust, as the one getting upset when not having the pleasure or when the pleasure is taken away from it, or when the man is	Passions

	<p>threatened and engulfed with pain, it is the anger. So, the lust and the anger are those which, by being attracted by the seen world and by its promises, they topple over the equilibrium between the mind's work and the senses' work, in the favor of the last ones. Through senses the mind can pursuit its preoccupations with the spiritual knowledge, but the lust can too pursuit its desires. The feeling, understood as pure perception of the senses, it is innocent in itself, and it can be enrolled in the mind's service. Only when through it the lust works for pleasure, it becomes feeling in a sinful sense. A minimum of pleasure can remain in the feeling, as a natural. But this affect must be overwhelmed by the spiritual power of the knower mind. For instance, when we eat, if we are totally preoccupied with the tasting of the pleasure which that food provides us, this feeling is a sinful one for through it there works the lust. The mind has only a subordinate role or contriving all the possibilities which the food can provide us with. But when we eat we restrain the feeling of the pleasure, by thinking at the food's purpose, at the benefaction which God gives us through food, at the duty we have to give others too, the necessary food, we will defeat the passion by bringing the feeling in the spiritual subordination to the mind." (Stăniloae 1992: 76)</p>	
77	<p>"By making abstraction of the fact that the passions are due to a weakening of the mind too, we ascertain that six of the eight capital passions belong to the faculty of the lust: the</p>	Passions

	belly's covetousness, the debauchery, the love for money, the laziness, the vain glory, and the pride." (Stăniloae 1992: 77)	
78	"The passions are the product of combining the lust with the anger. But the role of the soul's faculties related to the passions it is more complex. The passions do not mean a total abdication from any rationality and exclusively working the lust and the anger. We have seen that Saint Maximos the Confessor found between affects and passions the difference that the first ones do not depend on us, and the last ones depend on us at least until they become enough strong." (Stăniloae 1992: 78)	Passions
79	"An irrational access of wrath is short. But the passion of the anger is prolonged by will and by arguments over the limit of that moment, thus becoming a long habituation, which the man no longer can easily get rid of, and which then can often burst off in accesses. The access of wrath is an emotion which can be rapidly satisfied. In passion, though, the reflex and the will put that insatiable, infinite thirst, which they have turned it from the spiritual targets characteristic to them, towards nothing." (Stăniloae 1992: 79)	Passions
79	"The passion of anger is much worse than the affect. While the affect is animal and imposed by the man's organic life, the passion is diabolic and no longer is an instinctual manifestation of the nature, but an always wanted and thought at, manifestation. What it is explained like the capacity of these affects to emotions or rebellious affects to	Passions

	<p>attract our will, more or less unwillingly, on their side? This is explained by the fact that “in them there is an energy analogue to that of the will, and a so-called rational character”. In voluptuousness, in ambitions, there is a complexity, an amplitude, an appearance of plenitude, ... this world of the human passions it is full at its turn with some seeds of rationality, but, just because of that, it is full of possibilities of abuse too” (Blondel, <i>quoted work</i>: 192).” (Stăniloae 1992: 79)</p>	
79	<p>“We mustn’t understand our will as a force staying within us as detached from the ensemble of all the tendencies composing the dynamism of our being; but our will, as general tension of our being to exist, it must be will all our aspirations, it must want all of them, it must be in all of them. Of course that our will must want each of them, and in each of them our will must be as a force of accomplishing, for each of our tendencies it is framed in the general purpose of our whole being, for it collaborates to the wellbeing of the whole.” (Stăniloae 1992: 79)</p>	Will
79	<p>“The fact that the will, as function of the entire being, it is with each of the tendencies of this being, it gives to all tendencies a justification in front of it. All tendencies are legitimated, all of them have rationality for the will, and all of them are imparted in some measure with the will of existing of our being, as ensemble. The rationality and the will from within our tendencies, they stay in their justification and in</p>	Will

	their power of existing, which they are conferred with by their appurtenance to the ensemble of our being.” (Stăniloae 1992: 79)	
79-80	“The will and the rationality from within our tendencies, either they deceive the general will and rationality of our being, in order to join them, or they cause these general will and rationality to weaken in their function as sheltering and promoting the interests of our being’s whole, facing the force which some singular tendency bursts off with, and the sinful tendencies remain the only one keeping their ground and they take the role of guiding rationality and will, and they act, by substituting themselves for the general will and rationality, or by working as they would be the general will and rationality.” (Stăniloae 1992: 79-80)	Will
80	“We still feel within us the presence of the general will and rationality – even if they have been replaced with the sinful tendencies – which disapprove everything is being done. That’s why, most often, we feel within us two will and two rationalities. Only to the ones who have totally fell under the power of a passion the whole rationality can be totally perverted, in order to justify without reserves the justification of the tendency from within that passion in order to dominate upon the whole nature. And only in those one the whole will is put in the service of the passions. To the most of the people, making abstraction of the moments of the passion’s fury, of the moment of total “blindness”, there still remain a	Will

	<p>reserve of rationality and of will pleading - of course, without an effective force – for the rights of the being as a whole, and which ascertain that the rationality and the will which have been put in the service of the passion they do a wrong thing, that that will is “an irrational will”, a will that doesn’t fully bear the characteristics of the freedom, as the rationality serving the passion is a “reckless rationality” too. In such a case there has taken place a rupture in two of the will and of the rationality, or it has taken place a ramifying of their function, in a perverse action and in a healthy action. We work in this case, “willingly against our will”. (Blondel, <i>quoted work</i>: 195)” (Stăniloae 1992: 80)</p>	
80-81	<p>“The affect has become sin only through the partial or total solidarity between the rationality and the will and the sin. But the role of the rationality and of the will it doesn’t stop here. But, after the respective partial tendency has been satisfied by attracting the rationality and the will on its side, these ones strive to justify the adhesion which they have manifested, maybe, somewhat unwillingly”. (Stăniloae 1992: 80-81)</p>	Will
81	<p>“The man brings the justification retroactively because of in reality the crossing of the passion to deed it has brought him a satisfaction, a pleasure. Its memory is imprinted with some sweetness – like the memory of committing the deed it is too. From here comes the content for committing that deed, its ratification by a later will, and justifying it through</p>	Passions

	<p>rationalities comprised in that satisfaction itself. The memory of that sweet satisfaction, together with the rational justifications of the deed that occasioned them, and with the ratification through will, they push to repeating the respective sinful deed. So is born and it grows the passion, by a continual contribution of the rationality and of the will. Behold how even what is bad and passionate within man, it is marked by a rational and voluntary character. Behold who, without the rationality to descend in lust and in anger, or in the feeling (the sensitive perceiving) led by them, there cannot be born and cannot grow up the passions. Thus, the passions are born through the contribution of all the soul's faculties, through a wrong activity of theirs, indicating a sickness of the whole man." (Stăniloae 1992: 81)</p>	
81-83	<p>"The passions are a turning of the entire man towards exterior, towards the living according to senses, a transformation of the entire man in "body", in bodily feeling. The passions, as feeling through the senses crossed through by lust and anger, which have attracted the rationality in their exclusive service, they represent therefore a feeling in the most superficial part of our being, through "epidermis", or, as they say, an exit of our being from the region of the ontological truths, out of the connection with the existence's sources, o living on the edge of the nothing's precipice, from which doesn't come to us, when we awake from the passion's fire, except the sensation of emptiness, of false, of vanity of</p>	Acedia

our existence, of nothingness, dominant in the usual life, which has been so terribly analyzed by Heidegger or Sartre. That's why, the moment of passionate attraction and of satisfying the passion it is the product of a deceit. The superficial attracts us as it would be profound, consistent, and durable. Through passion "we want with infinite force, the nothing", as says Blondel, of the pass alternatively from the effervescence which pursuits the nothing without realizing it (but which shows its presence in the conscience of a thirst that cannot be satisfied), to feeling the nothing, unveiled in the loathing and in the disgust which follow to this effervescence. Through passions we inflate the nothing, we are stirred up by it, we consume ourselves for it, we move in its area, and we end in the absence of any positive source of existence. Through passions we stretch our increasingly dry throat after some water which is only a momentary illusion, or which, after a short deceit, it appears to us as a drop that makes us even thirstier. As we experience, through long passionate rushing upon, the impossibility to satisfy ourselves with it, or with the nothing from within it, this nothing becomes increasingly obvious to us, and the sentiment of futility overwhelms us increasingly more, and in time it throws us in carelessness, in a killer spiritual idleness. This is what the Holy Fathers called "acedia". Acedia is, according to Evagrius and Saint Maximos, more burdening than all. While the other passions are distributed

preponderantly on one of the three faculties of the soul, as Saint Maximos said, this last drowsiness paralyzes all the soul's powers: rationality, lust, and wrath. It sometimes comes even upon the ones who are advanced in the spiritual life. Behold what Hausherr describes the acedia like, according Evagrius, in the form that comes upon the ones who strive to reach the consummation: "The demon of acedia is the most difficult to bear with. He drips his bitterness in all our motives of living in a supra-natural mode. There is no love around you. God Himself doesn't manifest any interest in you, because otherwise, who could he let you be tempted by such devils? The devil of acedia cuts off any hope, making the soul to accept the thought of death in any virtue (12, 14). Either you know or not, if this though persists, it will darken in the time of prayer the holy light in the face of the soul (16). You won't dare any longer to search for the mercy of God despite all your prayers (18). You feel the need for crying, but an awful suggestion stops your tears: they serve to nothing (19). And this lasts for days and you foresee a long life you will have to live in this torture (24). Decidedly, there is no person there above in order to see my torment! (32, 34). When this burden of acedia falls upon you, you will want to shout out your discouragement and your boredom (37). This can lead to illness. This is because the intensity of your drowsiness it consumed the whole your force, and you are at the end of your patience, and you feel yourselves nigh to the furious

	insanity. You groan and you shed tears like a child, and no relief come from anywhere (38)” (Blondel 1946: 1-2; quoted from Evagrius).” (Stăniloae 1992: 81-83)	
83	“The ones on the ascendant path of the spiritual consummation, they exit the crises caused by acedia, for they know the methods and their will is firm enough in order to endure. The faith they have been exercising themselves in, it doesn’t allow them to throw over all the things, in a durable manner, the verdict of futility and nothingness. But beyond these, there is God. But the ones who reach acedia before strengthening themselves on the path of consummation after they have been vainly searching for quenching their thirst for absolute in diverse passions, nothing could have get them out of acedia, if a wonder hadn’t awakened within them a strong faith in God. Those ones easily end in suicide, after crossing through insanity.” (Stăniloae 1992: 83)	Acedia
5. What the Passions are Stirred Up Like, According to the Traditional Orthodox Doctrine		
83	“The mode the passions are stirred up within us indicates the mode we can resist their stirring up. We are specifying here that the mode of the passions’ stirring up is the same with the mode of passions’ birth. The difference consists only of the fact that the birth is harder than the stirring up, because of not existing yet the passion like a sleeping beast which only needs to be awakened. But there is inflammable material within us even before any passion, constituted of affects, and this helps in some measure to the birth of the passion, like	Passions

	the already existing passion helps its own stirring up.” (Stăniloae 1992: 83)	
83	“Who hasn’t experimented yet that the passion is stirred up, sometimes, when we are in the middle of accomplishing a good decision, of after we have finished that, or when we are in a state of meditation or of soul’s resting without any perspective of making then any decision? In all cases the passion is stirred up as a resistance and a revolt of the overlooked tendencies. In the mentioned cases - and in others too - the passion have within us some antecedents.” (Stăniloae 1992: 83)	Passions
84-86	“The question is: what the passions is stirred up like in all cases? In all the Orthodox spiritual writings it is repeated, as mode of passions’ stirring up in any circumstance, the following scheme: satan throws within our mind a thought, the so-called attack, which we think we can translated it like bait. It is the first arising of the simple thought that we could do a certain sinful deed, presenting itself to the mind as a simple possibility. This thought is not a sin yet, for we haven’t adopted any attitude related to it. It seems to be outside us, it hasn’t been produced by us, and it has yet only a theoretical character, of non-serious eventuality, which seems even not seriously regarding us who are preoccupied with the whole our being with something else. We do not know where that thought has come from, and seemingly somebody has playfully	Passions

thrown a flower on the side of the road which the preoccupation of our cogitation it is being unfolded on, and we only take a moment for looking at it and then we pass forwards. Therefore, this thought has all the characteristics of a thought thrown by somebody, and that's why the saints attribute it to satan. It is the simple thought at an eventual sinful deed, which hasn't depicted yet in our mind any concrete image of that deed and of the circumstances which it could be committed in. There are also cases which the passion is suddenly stirred up in, as a fire that lights us up immediately.

When is stirred up only like a not-fiery thought, from this attack to the sinful deed there are several levels. Hesychios of Sinai counts up four levels: the attack, the accompanying, the consent, and the sensitive deed. Saint John Damascene counts up seven levels: "the attack, the accompanying, the struggle, the enslavement, the consent, and the doing. The decisive moment is that one which our cogitation takes attitude in. If we banish the sinful thought from the first moment, we will have escaped. If we start meditating upon the sinful thought, and to sweeten ourselves by thinking at the perspectives of the sin, there has been produced "the accompanying, the mixing of our thoughts with the thoughts of the cunning devils". Now we have stuck to the evil thought, and we have impropriated it, and it no longer stays within us as a foreign thought. By this, we have entered the sin's area

and only with difficulty we will be able to stop this process's unfolding to its end, since this process has been triggered. Then follows the consent to the deed, or the composite plan of our thoughts and of the satan's thoughts, in order to do the deed. Only now the simple thought is being concretized in images. According to Saint John Damascene, through the accompanying of ours with that thought, it takes place as second phase the inward passions.

The bait still isn't a sin, for it doesn't depend on us to take place, and no man is spared by it.

But let's see in more details what this simple thought of the sin, it occurs without images, into our mind and heart for?

Firstly, in what way it comes to us this thought from the devil in? Does it come directly, or still through something from within us? Saint Mark the Ascetic, who repeated in his writing *About Baptism* that this thought is thrown within us by satan, he said in the *Head no. 140* of the *Spiritual Law* that this thought is "a borderless movement of the heart", and in the *Head no. 179*, that, though this movement, "the lusts call the mind to a certain passion" (*The Romanian Philokalia*, vol. I, p. 243; p. 246).

On the other hand, Diadochus of Photice says since Baptism satan is no longer in the deep of our soul, namely within our mind, but in "the body's senses", "working through the body's easily to be influenced nature, upon the ones who still are children in their soul". (...)

From here it results that satan sends us the bait through the mediation of the bodily lusts, by stirring up the movement of some lust that has been dormant within our subconscious. (...)

The bait is, therefore, the first occurrence in conscience of an evil desire. In the beginning the bait has not vehemence, and it presents itself as being a simple thought. Better said, the conscience notices the bait right from its first stirring up, and this first work of the bait in conscience it is being done under the form of a thought. Only if not choked by our assertive action, this movement gains intensity, so that we hardly could resist it.

Usually, this stage of stirring up of a lust – the first apparition of the bait within conscience – it is occasioned by looking at some external things. This circumstance gave birth to the idea that satan is nesting in the countenance of a thing and he sends directly a thought of sin in our cogitation, without using the stirring up of a subconscious lust, as means for that. Despite all these, it is not excluded in these cases too, that the lust from within us too it has been stirred up before looking at the external thing, and just that to have been placed in that thing the impression which we reckon as stirring up the lust. The coming of the bait, in the most cases, on this way, determined the Holy Fathers to recommend the closing up of the senses in times of temptations' rushing in. But in some cases the bait occurs within us without us to

	<p>look at external things. In such cases it starts working the memory of a repeated sin. Anyway, though, both in the first cases and in the second cases, it is very reasonable to admit that the ultimate engine of the bait is a ghost differing from us, because, otherwise, what the memory of a passion is stirred up exactly in certain cases for, and what it is stirred up only in some moments of looking at external things for?" (Stăniloae 1992: 84-86)</p>	
87	<p>"The work for restoring the man it must begin with the faith, which is on one hand a matter of will, and on the other hand it refers to the mind, by giving the mind an intellectual attitude or a conception offering the mind arguments against the sin. The duty which, consequently to this fact, it is imposed to the one who wants to live his life towards consummation, it is that of permanently watching upon the thoughts that occur in the field of this conscience, in order to eliminate from its first apparition any thought at some passion. The guarding of the mind, the attention, and the woken and steadfast resisting against thought, are relentless recommendations of the spiritual masters, to the ones who doesn't want to fall prey to the passions. It would seem that this means keeping the course of our life on a rigid, narrowed road, which makes impossible any enriching of our life. Actually, it means keeping our mind sunk, full of love, in the godlike infinite, which enriches our mind with always new clean meanings." (Stăniloae 1992: 87)</p>	Passions

87-88	<p>“What is rejected in ascesis is not the new spiritual soars and inspirations, but the exaggerated tendencies of the sense’s lusts, which, far from bringing an enrichment of the spirit, they actually narrow the spirit, they infinitely tie the spirit on finite things, it impede the spirit in his tendencies of widening his possibilities of understanding. There are constantly removed the boulders thrown in the way of an advancing river, a river getting wider. To the body’s life it is accepted the satisfying of the strictly necessary needs. But no really rational argument can plead for the removal of this dam from the way of the lusts which direct themselves in muddy and narrow streets.” (Stăniloae 1992: 87-88)</p>	Asceticism and Mysticism
6. The Addiction and the Worry		
88	<p>“The nervous lead of any passion it is the addiction, the desire tying us on the seen appearances of the things which promise us a lot and give us very little if nothing.” (Stăniloae 1992: 88)</p>	Addiction
88	<p>“The addiction attracts towards exterior all of our soul’s powers. The addiction is the glue sticking us on the surface of the external world. The ascesis’ problem is what this addiction can be killed like, namely the substance of the passions, and not what to kill our authentic being in, or to kill the world we live in. What could we reach like, in this world, as free beings, admiring and understanding the world as creation of God, without this admiration to enslave us to the world’s sensitive and opaque surface, thus impeding our development as beings oriented towards the spiritual infinite</p>	Ascesis

	order? What could be use this road like, towards our target, without falling down and succumb on it?" (Stăniloae 1992: 88)	
88	<p>"What ties us on things it still is the worry. The worry is the bitter fruit of the passions or of the addiction to the world's things. The passion lives its apogee in tasting the pleasure and rebelling against pain (sadness, anger). The passionate man alternates his existence between the pleasure's voluptuousness and the pain's torments. Often, these ones are not totally separated from each other. The moments preoccupied with pleasure and with pain are actually rare, but both the pleasure and the pain keep the man's being under tension way before being them actually lived. O great part of the man's life is in waiting for and searching for pleasures and in the fear of present and future pains. This is a fruit of the passions, and it is the relentless manifestation of the passions' presence within us. These waiting and this fears cause us worries. But even in the intervals when we aren't actually aware of waiting for a pleasure, of that we fear of a future pain, we work in order to provide ourselves with some pleasures and for avoiding some unspecified pains. The engine pushing us in this work it is the worry. The worry is appointed by the addiction on the front plan of the life and it is the steadfast deputy of the life, in the intervals which the addiction withdraws on the back plan. While the "lady addiction" sleeps, her maid, lady worry (Frau Sorge) stays</p>	Worry

	awake and takes vigil, “with her hair rebelled and with her murky eyes, due to her almost permanent lack of sleeping”. (Stăniloae 1992: 88)	
88-89	“According to Heidegger, the worry is a structure comprising the entire man’s constitution. Through worry, the man is always “beyond himself” (Sichvorwegsein). The worry is a restless structure of the man’s dynamism, an existential structure, and it isn’t a static feature. In this man’s general characteristic of “being always before himself” it is manifested the phenomenon of the “fear” (Angst), another existential; structure of the man, which is fuelled on one hand by the fact that the man is an existence taking part to the world, unsure of the possibilities which the world can provide us with, and on the other hand, by the sentiment that he is a being given to his own responsibility, having always to launch himself towards his future possibilities, namely towards the most characteristic possibility of his.” (Stăniloae 1992: 88-89)	Worry
89	“The worry’s engine is the fear and the man tries through worry to always accomplish his future possibilities related to the world that he is nailed in. Being part of the world it essentially means being worried. The worry do not let the man free from its chains, not even for a moment, while the man lives: “Cura teneat, quamdiu vixerit” says a legend from mythology, which divides the man between Jupiter (the soul), Tellus (the earth), and the worry (the existence of earth).” (Stăniloae 1992: 89)	Worry

89	<p>“Heidegger confessed that this interpretation of the man as worry, as also this phenomenological analysis of the worry, it came to him out of a trying of his for interpreting the Augustinian anthropology, namely the Hellenic-Christian anthropology.” (Stăniloae 1992: 89)</p>	Worry
89	<p>“The features of the worry are: 1) it is a fruit of the fear; 2) a fruit of the man’s intertwining with the world (of fearing the world); 3) and as permanent launching before himself; 4) because of the awareness that he is given to himself; 5) in order to accomplish his most characteristic possibility; but through worry 6) the man doesn’t search for and he doesn’t actually obtain the accomplishing of his most characteristic possibility, because of not springing out to himself as his intimate self, and therefore the purpose characteristic to the existence it has remained yet, hidden to him – this corresponding to the Christian anthropological conception.” (Stăniloae 1992: 89)</p>	Worry
89-90	<p>“The analysis that Heidegger done it to the worry, it isn’t a complete one, firstly because of the fact that the worry he focused upon it has some more characteristics, and secondly because of the Christendom knows another worry too, besides this worldly worry. The analysis of the worldly worry it misses three more elements: the addiction, the pleasure, and the pain; they are the essential spikes nailing the man to the world, and which the man feels the “In-der-Welt-sein” through, and which explain the man’s “fear” of the world. The</p>	Worry

	addiction searches for the pleasure that ties the man to the world. The addiction, intertwined with the pain, they determine the man to permanently launch himself before himself, in order to secure for himself the pleasure and to avoid the pain. And the worldly fear is a precisely determined fear: the fear of not lacking the pleasure in the future and of experiencing pain. Besides, this determines the man that, instead of unveiling “his intimate self” (das Selbst) and instead of searching for accomplishing his characteristic possibility, to remain through worry as fallen to the state of the general self (das Man) and to accomplish possibilities which are improper to him, or to fail – failure that isn’t explained by Heidegger, for he overlooked the elements which could have explained it.” (Stăniloae 1992: 89-90)	
90	“The aspect well highlighted by Heidegger as effect of the worry it is the total or exaggerated enchainment of the man to the world, and his going down to a grey, improper, monotonous, enslaved, and superficial existence.” (Stăniloae 1992: 90)	Worry
90	“By the fact that Heidegger sees as last explanation of the worry in the man’s sentiment that he must accomplish “his most characteristic –possibility”, a target missed by the worry as analyzed by Heidegger, as also by the fact that even the man who has retrieved his intimacy he still launches himself before himself in order actually to accomplish his most characteristic possibility, we can see that to Heidegger it	Worry

	shined such a worry for an instant, to which he still shied to name it as worry too. This is the man's "worry" for his eternal fate, the worry for salvation." (Stăniloae 1992: 90)	
90-91	<p>"The worry for salvation it opposes to the worldly worry. It is no longer the man's worry for his existence within world, and it no longer comes out of the addiction to the world's pleasures, and therefore neither is the fear of the world's pains. A contrary, this worry springs out where it is rejected "the whole worldly worry", for this worry it means the worry to be pleasant to God, and not to be pleasant to the world in order to become partakers to the world's pleasures and to be spared of the world's pains. This worry of being pleasant to God it grows up out of the responsibility that the man has for his true self, by satisfying the commandments of this responsibility; this worry is in the same time a continuous launching of the man over himself, towards the source of his eternal life, but it is a launching towards the height from beyond the world, and not downwards, towards the world, but it is a true self-surpassing. This worry it interprets at its turn a man's fear, but it is a fear of definitively ending in death, this fear being the only one able to escape the man from what he fears in the world. To the definition of this worry it doesn't belong anymore to the addiction to the world, as the absolute and the man's total appurtenance to the world (In-der-Welt-sein). The man continues be to within the world, but he is in the same time above the world; on one hand, the man is in a</p>	Worry

	necessary mode within world by the bodily side of his being; but on the other hand the man is and he tends to be above world, or he is even within world as free and spiritual being, and therefore he is, in the world, unlike what the animals and the things are like. The world can take hold on the man, but not on the whole of the man's being. On one hand, the world takes hold upon the man; on the other hand, on an even greater measure, the world is at the man's disposition." (Stăniloae 1992: 90-91)	
91	"The man must get rid of the worldly worry, in order to make on himself available to God. When the man has got rid of the worldly worry, he escaped the addiction, he has achieved the dispassion, and he has become free of passions and of world. The purification aims this liberation from worry, and not the liberation from worrying about God. Through the worry about God, or by fulfilling the will of God, it is being accomplished our authentic human being." (Stăniloae 1992: 91)	Worry
B The Purification of Passions through Virtues		
1. The Order of the Purification and the Patristic Spiritual Methods		
91	"Purifying the soul of passions it cannot be obtained by achieving a neutral state of the soul, but by replacing the passions for the contrary virtues." (Stăniloae 1992: 91)	Passions
91	"In the Eastern ascetic literature are known writings specially destined to the method of gradual purification of passions, through the contrary virtues. We have "The Ladder to	Asceticism and Mysticism

	Paradise” of Saint John Climacus, “The Exact Method and Rule” of Kallistos and Ignatius Xanthopol, and “The Words” of Saint Isaac the Syrian - though the last one is less systematic.” (Stăniloae 1992: 91)	
91	““The Ladder to Paradise” of John Climacus, dating from the Seventh Century, it is a complete treaty on the spiritual life. It describes thirty levels which a monk must cross through, from the moment he has renounced to the world until he will reach the consummation, namely until he will reach the love. Saint John Climacus wrote only for monks. He barely addresses himself to the ordinary Christians, and only in order to show them that they can bring their life too, close to the monks’ life, the last one being, without any doubt, the consummate one.” (Stăniloae 1992: 91)	Asceticism and Mysticism
91-92	“John Climacus wanted to take in account, in the levels of his “Ladder”, the climbing from a less consummate level of the life to a more consummate level, namely he wanted to take in account the laws which the live can become consummate through. Following these rules, and for he wrote for monks, John Climacus has established the rejection of the world – as external renunciation - as the first level. ON the second level he placed the mortification of the “addiction” to the world, namely of the impulses tying us to the world, as internal renunciation. The third level, that one of the estrangement, it consummated the first two levels. To these renunciations which rather aim the bodily passions (the covetousness of the	Asceticism and Mysticism

belly, the love for money, the fornication, and then the sadness and the anger growing up out of the mentioned ones), it follows, as the fourth level, the obedience, through which one must cut off the vain glory and the pride. Here is shown the necessity of having a spiritual father, and on this level too, it is described the humbleness as opposite to pride. It follows the repentance for the life from before (chapter 5) and in immediate connection with it, it follows the meditation at death (chapter 6) and the crying, which brings joy (chapter 7). Out of tears are born “the lack-of-anger and the gentleness”. That’s why those ones are placed on the eighth level. “For as the water slowly it totally sets the fire off, likewise the tear of the true crying it kills off the whole flame of the anger and of the fury”. Because of giving birth to remembering the evil did to us by others, after the author showed how one can remove the anger, he spoke about the virtue contrary to this sin, namely about forgetting the evil did to us by others (chapter 9). A consequence of the hatred and of the remembering the evil it is the gossiping; this is combated on the next level (chapter 10). “The gossip’s door is the much-speaking. Restraining the much-speaking through silence, it constitutes the preoccupation of the eleventh level. The twelfth chapter treats about lie, the child of the much-speaking, and the thirteenth chapter speaks about laziness, and the first grandson of the much-speaking. On the following levels the author described each passion and the means for combating

	<p>them, starting with the covetousness of the belly and ending with the pride (chapters 14-23), and then he described on the last levels the simplicity or the innocence as contrary virtues (24), the humbleness as the highest destroyer of all passions (chapter 25), the discerning of the thoughts (chapter 26), the appeasing of the body and of the soul (chapter 27), the dispassion, as being heaven on earth, the consummation and the resurrection of the soul before the general resurrection (chapter 29) and the chain of the three virtues: the faith, the hope, and the love (chapter 30).” (Stăniloae 1992: 91-92)</p>	
92-94	<p>“The “Method” of Kallistos and Ignatius, written in the Fourteenth Century, it is also called as Centuria, because of being divided in one hundred heads. At a first glance, it creates the impression of some long chaining of quotes without a rigorous plan. (...) The truth about the “Method” it can be detaches by presenting the order which this book treats the ascetic efforts for consummation in: in the first chapter it speaks about the Holy Ghost, Who is in the believers’ hearts since Baptism; in the chapters 2-4, on the book’s purpose, it is about the beginning and the final end of the spiritual life, the beginning consisting of “living according to the Savior’s commandments, and the final end consisting of coming back to the grace that we have been given with at Baptism”. The chapter 5 and 7 treat, more thoroughly, about the grace that we have been given with at Baptism, about the passions which covered this grace up, and about</p>	Asceticism and Mysticism

rediscovering this grace, again, by fulfilling the commandments. The beginning of working the commandments stays in calling the name of Jesus Christ, out of which the peace and the love spring out (chapters 8-13). The 14 and 15 chapters treat about rejecting the world and about submission. Until here it was an introduction of principles, and from here it follows the practical teaching. In the sixteenth chapter (divided in ten parts) it is treated again the theme of the faith, of the good deeds, and the need for a peaceful soul, not-scattered, and serene. After in the 17 and 18 chapters it treats about the beginners' fear, in the chapters 19 to 24 it is exposed the method of the Prayer of Jesus. Then it is shown what the diverse parts of the day must be lived like, and the diverse days of the weeks, and the holy fasting periods (25-37), about the diverse virtues, as the humbleness, the gift of the discernment, and the repentance (38-47), and then it is treated again about the theme of the clean prayer (48-54), and then it speaks about the warmth produced within heart by the clean prayer and about the love for God comprised in this prayer (55-57). The following chapters treat about tears (58), about the godlike working (61), about the godlike light (60, 63), about the good and the evil imaginings (64-69, 73), about mind and the mind's dispassion (70, 72), about the godlike comforting and pleasure (74-76), about gentleness and quietude (77-78), against about repentance (79-81), about attention (82), about calling Jesus within our

	heart (83), about the ecstatic love (84), about forsaking (85), about dispassion (86-87), and about the difference between dispassion and addiction (88-89). The chapters 90-92 are a lecture about the three theological virtues and about Eucharist, and the chapter 94-100 close with two recapitulations, by recommending this way of life as the best one, though there are other savior ways too.” (Stăniloae 1992: 92-94)	
94	“In the “Method” of Kallistos and Ignatius we don’t find a detailed exposition of the passions and of what each one can be combated like, as we do at John Climacus, but the “Method” rather presents the positive part of the spiritual ascension, paying a great attention to the Prayer of Jesus, this fact showing the recent influence of the hesychast movement upon the “Method”. That’s why the method of the “Centuria” it completes well the method of the “Ladder”.” (Stăniloae 1992: 94)	Asceticism and Mysticism
94	“Although the Method of the “Centuria” comprises many repetitions, they are explainable by the fact that on the diverse levels of the spiritual life the virtues of the previous life must be always worked in a superior form. In the chapters of the “Centuria” one can, though, easily distinguish the three phases of the spiritual ascension. After the recommendations of general soul’s attitude (chapter 16-24), starting with the chapter 24 and ending with the chapter 39, there are exposed several percepts regarding the external discipline of the	Asceticism and Mysticism

	spiritual life; starting with the chapter 40 and ending with the chapter 89, the “Centuria” continues with teachings referring to the life live through powers from above, this culminating into dispassion.” (Stăniloae 1992: 94)	
94	“Saint Isaac the Syrian’s “Words” have a similar content to that of Saint John Climacus’ “Ladder”, but they aren’t so systematically exposed. In exchange, the analyses of the diverse passions and virtues are more detailed. Saint Isaac the Syrian put a great accent on the importance of bearing the troubles in order to achieve the purification.” (Stăniloae 1992: 94)	Asceticism and Mysticism
95	“The simplest and the most comprising scheme corresponding to the development of the spiritual life, it seems to us that of Saint Maximos the Confessor, who considered the spiritual ascension as having the following levels: the faith, the fear of God, the restraint, the patience and the long-suffering, the hope, the dispassion, and the love.” (Stăniloae 1992: 95)	(Stăniloae 1992: 95)
2. The Faith as Primordial Condition of the Purification		
95	“The faith is the first step in the spiritual life. “The faith is by nature the beginning of all virtues. Thus “the good, by being the end of the virtues, it is concentrated inside the faith”. The faith is the concentrated good, and the good is the actualized faith (Saint Maximos the Confessor, <i>Quaest. Ad Thalassianum</i> , q. 55; G.P. 90, 564). ” (Stăniloae 1992: 95)	Faith
95	“Actually one cannot start any action against passions, and	Faith

	<p>one cannot lay down the beginning of any virtues if there isn't the faith present as an impetus. The restraint, as steadfast effort, it needs to be legitimated through faith, and the fear of God presupposes the faith in God. It is right that the restraint and above all a virtuous life, they strengthen at their turn, the faith, but their first engine has been, though, the faith. Before any virtues, and before any man's effort, we must somehow receive the faith within us. For we have the faith through the godlike grace, it was needed that the grace to precede any good thing which we start walking towards. Thus, the good beginning is laid down by God through Baptism. The whole our virtuous life isn't but an unfolding of this good beginning that has been laid down by God. Of course, there isn't about an automatic development, one without our assent, but it is about a development wanted by us and helped by us, through the whole our straining." (Stăniloae 1992: 95)</p>	
95-96	<p>"Before any virtues we must have the faith achieved at or strengthened by Baptism. But our faith's efficacy it depends on our collaboration in order us to advance on the road of the virtues, towards consummation. Thus the faith is a virtue too, it is a good thing, but it is shown as a good thing through our collaboration. This collaboration, in the beginning, it consists of simple will to believe and not of the will of doing something. Unavoidably, the first straining of our will in order to do the good, it cannot have any other object except: to believe. Even from our side one cannot start from somewhere else,</p>	Faith

	<p>regarding any changing of our life in good, except from believing. And the one who wants to believe, he reaches being able to believe. But the fact that by wanting somebody to believe he reaches to believe, it is due to a presence of a previous grace within us. This is for by his simple will of believing, the man couldn't even reach to believe. Empirically, the man tends to imagine that everything depends on his will, in order the necessity of his contribution to be accentuated. But on trans-empirical plan, there is present the grace as help. Even the fact that the man is able to want to believe, it is a gift of faith, but it doesn't force him to believe. Starting with the moment which somebody wants to believe on, he actually reached to believe - and the grace hidden within him since Baptism, or the faith as virtuality, it has been actualized by the fact that the man has brought his contribution too." (Stăniloae 1992: 95-96)</p>	
96	<p>"Before starting on the road of the purification, the man needs to strengthen the faith he received at Baptism, through his own will. But the faith being my relationing to God, I cannot strengthen my faith except by starting to think more often at Him, and not in a theoretical mode as to a theme of philosophical cogitation, but like at the One on Whom I depend in all my things, and Who can help me in my insufficiencies. The thinking at God is concretized, or it is maintained, by shortly and often remembering Him, done with awe, with the sentiment that we depend on Him. Such a</p>	Faith

	word focuses our thoughts towards God, or towards Jesus Christ., towards what he did for us, as basis for our trust that He is going to help us now again.” (Stăniloae 1992: 96)	
96-97	“We reckon that the “Centuria” of Kallistos and Ignatius it was right to place at the beginning of the spiritual ascension, the faith as gift from the grace, and the remembrance the name of Jesus Christ too. “The beginning of any pleasant to God work, it is the calling, with faith, of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, since Himself told us: “Without Me you cannot do anything” (Jn. 14: 9). That’s why, all the great teachers of the asceticism taught that before any other good work or preoccupation, everybody, and especially the ones wanting to enter the stage of the deifying quietude, they must consecrate themselves to God and they must ask for His mercy without doubting: and the all-holy and all-sweet His name, let them have it like a non-missing object of working and of meditating, and let them bear it ceaselessly in their heart and in their mind and on their lips, and let them breathe with it, and live with it, and sleep with it, and take vigil with it, and to move with it, and to eat with it.” (<i>The Greek Philokalia</i> , Second Edition, vol. II, p. 352.)” (Stăniloae 1992: 96-97)	Prayer of Jesus (/of the Heart)
97	“Of course, one cannot reach, suddenly, such a continuous remembrance of God, especially of the name of Jesus. Neither is good, to somebody, to reach too soon to it, because in such a case the remembrance would be done too automatically. It is good that this remembrance of Jesus to gradually become	Prayer of Jesus (/of the Heart)

	<p>more often, on the measure that the soul gets accustomed to focusing its thought on God, and on the measure that the soul grows up in faith in, and in love for God. But it is good that just from the beginning somebody remembers God more often, by using a certain name (“Lord”, “Jesus”), or even only by focusing his thought on such a name, in a moment of narrowing, or of resting, while being on road or at work.” (Stăniloae 1992: 96-97)</p>	
97	<p>“The need for faith as first level of the spiritual ascension it comes, though, out of the way of the passions’ stirring up. As we have seen, the decisive moment in stirring up the passions it is the sliding of the rationality from its natural position, because of being attracted by lust awakened into conscience. On that moment the lust of the innocent affect it receives power and it becomes condemnable. The sin commence on each time through a falling of the rationality, through a falling off the truth, through rationality’s sliding on a wrong road, and by forgetting the rationality’s purpose. Therefore here is where we must bring the first strengthening, namely at the first outpost which the enemy can conquer. Namely, we must strengthen the rationality in order to resist. This strengthening is being done through faith. The faith makes the rationality standing steadfastly in an intellectual attitude, in a conception of life. Of course, the faith isn’t, at least at the beginning, and intellectual proof convincing the rationality through a stringency of exclusively gnosiological order. The</p>	Faith

	<p>faith is mostly achieved, by will, and therefore it is a virtue. The faith has a double aspect: intellectual and voluntary.” (Stăniloae 1992: 97)</p>	
97-98	<p>“The faith is, on one hand, a conception, a point of view, and on the other hand it is an act of will. The faith is an intellectual-voluntary synthesis. But neither the sliding away of the rationality isn’t a purely intellectual act, but it is a voluntary act too. Neither the rationality has taken the side of the lust only because of being convinces by purely intellectual reasons concerning the truth represented by the lust, but it has done this also through a weakening of the will, rather pretending of being convinced on an intellectual way than really being convinced. Consequently, in order to bring the rationality back to its firmness from the beginning, one need more than a purely intellectual act, which to simply convince the rationality about the judgment mistake it has committed, but there is needed a moral help too. As the rationality has fallen, for it has wanted to fall, likewise it is made steadfast by faith, for it wants to become steadfast. The falling is an intellectual-voluntary act; fixing the falling it must be done through such acts too.” (Stăniloae 1992: 97-98)</p>	Faith
98-99	<p>“By accentuating the will in the act of the faith, we don’t want to say that the faith doesn’t comprise some evidence too. The faith isn’t an intellectual attitude depending exclusively on the will. A Catholic theologian says: “In the light of the faith the same divine names which the philosopher pronounces, they</p>	Theology

	<p>receive untold dimensions; they are deepened in their content and their significations become analogue to a new power” (Ch. Journet, <i>Connaissance et inconnaissance de Dieu</i>, Fribourg, 1943, p. 46). The concepts referring to God which the natural rationality has, they receive by faith a new brightness, one unknown to the metaphysics or to the natural man, and they resemble to some pearls brought in the light of the sun (Idem). So, the faith pours new evidence over some rational truths referring to God. But the faith brings right from the beginning a plus of evidence to some truth which the rationality had before, and this means in the same time a focusing of the rationality in certain certitudes. The Catholicism considers that the rationality has the certitude of some divine truth even before having faith. The Orthodox is less optimistic concerning this aspect; the Orthodoxy recognizes that the natural rationality can discern out of contemplating the world some truths about God, but it reckons that the rationality misses the absolute certitude in those truths. Anyway, the plus of evidence brought by faith it must mean to the Catholics too, a plus of certitude, a plus of strength in the decision of standing next to these truths.” (Stăniloae 1992: 98-99)</p>	
99	<p>“Where does the plus of certitude brought by faith from? Even if this plus meant an increasing of the natural evidence, it wouldn’t come out of the natural rationality’s powers, but it comes from above. The Orthodoxy applies here its doctrine</p>	Divine Uncreated Energies

	<p>about the divine uncreated energies of God. A divine uncreated energy of God penetrates our mind as a light. That's why we said that the faith doesn't depend only on our will, but it is eased also through its intrinsic evidence and through the power coming from above that brings this evidence, or it touches the powers of our spirit in order to notice the reality of God. But by needing to be noticed through our powers, our powers must at their turn to make an effort even if that effort is facilitated by the godlike influence. That's why the will is needed too: not in order to create this evidence, but in order to highlight it. Through the voluntary laziness of the rationality, this evidence has been darkened; through the voluntary striving of the rationality, helped by the divine grace to overcome the laziness, this evidence is lightened again. On one hand, in faith there is an element of encounter between will and rationality, and on the other hand, the will contributes to highlighting the evidence within faith, evidence produced by grace. One grows up through another, reciprocally. By hiding Himself before the face of the man, God stimulates the man through some pressure in order the man to search for Him; and when searched, He partially unveils Himself, in order to stimulate the man even more. God puts our will in working, but without this will He doesn't unveil Himself to us." (Stăniloae 1992: 99)</p>	
99	<p>"The faith gradually grows up to an all-luminous evidence. But the faith grows up on the measure we fulfill the</p>	Faith

	<p>commandments and achieve the virtues. This is for through these ones we show that we feel the presence of God and we open ourselves even more to Him. This means that the faith is present from the beginning, but it grows up through all the virtues we later achieve. Besides, each virtues once achieved won't be lost if we persevere on the ascending path of the Christians spiritual life, but it remains even after the following virtues are born out of it, growing up and receiving superior qualitative modifications, under the influence of the new virtues, in order to be coordinated with those ones." (Stăniloae 1992: 99)</p>	
99	<p>"The faith is the first virtue which we hit the road with. The faith is the little creek which the creeks of the other virtues are added later to, together becoming the big, all-comprising, and impossible to be turned back river of a totally virtuous life. In love there are gathered together all the virtues. Meanwhile, the faith, without being lost, it has gradually gained evidence, and in the phase of the love the faith becomes a contemplation of God, as love is contemplation too." (Stăniloae 1992: 99)</p>	Faith
100	<p>"The faith couldn't be from the beginning a properly-said knowledge. From the primordial state of contemplating God, there is a long way to go, in order to liberate his mind of the darkening brought by passions. For the time being, we are imparted with a glimmer, and only on the measure which we are thinning the passions' layer of mud on, the glimmer of the</p>	Faith

	faith in the darkness which we are at the beginning in, it become a blinding light. Getting rid of the ignorance from the beginning it grows out of fear.” (Stăniloae 1992: 100)	
3. The Fear of God and the Thought at Judgment		
100	“Progressing, the faith becomes fear of God. On one hand, not the faith is born out of the fear of God, but the fear is born out of faith. This is for in order to fear Him, you must believe in Him. On the other hand, the faith cannot develop without crossing through fear or, the faith might be helped from the beginning by fear (Acts 2: 37). The faith isn’t purely theoretical either at the beginning, but it has, through the fear that accompanies the faith, an existential character. A faith which hasn’t reached the fear yet, or which hasn’t been accompanied by fear since the beginning, it hasn’t gained a satisfying efficiency for starting the deeds.” (Stăniloae 1992: 100)	Fear of God
100-101	“The fear of God is the opposite of the fear of world. The fear of God has the purpose of overwhelming the fear of world. The fear of world’s pains and tribulations makes us throwing ourselves with the whole recklessness towards the world’s pleasures and towards the prosperous situations which can spare us of eventual needs. The fear of world it tides us to the world, it makes us obeying the world, and it makes us not to listen to the higher calling from God that is made us by faith. That’s why the world’s attraction force, manifested not only through the addiction to the world’s pleasures, but also	Fear of God

	<p>through the fear of world, it must be counterbalanced by an even greater fear: by the fear of God. This is because of not being us able, from the beginning, to feel the joys which God will make us partakers to, and therefore not being us able to detach ourselves from the world for those joys, we must be detached from the world by an act of power, by an act of frightening, by a bigger fear, namely by the fear of God. That's why the spiritual writers discern two sorts of fears of God: the fear felt by servants – namely the fear of His punishment, and the fear out of love – namely the fear of not being us deprived of His kindness. The first one belongs to the beginners, while the second one belongs to the advanced ones. But neither the fear of God of the beginners it isn't totally weakness, but it is also a great power of facing fear of world – this last fear being only weakness and slavery and totally lacking the freedom. The fear of world we suffer it for it dominates us by weakening our will. The fear of God is a force that strengthens our will that makes us active factors instead of passive puppets. Even in the fear of God there is a power from God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 100-101)</p>	
101	<p>“Heidegger discerned between the fear of “something from within world” (Furcht) and the fear of world's emptiness from all over, namely of existing within world, which is felt as menacing on each moment with its platitude and nothingness, a modality of an own living making its intimacy transparent to everyone (Angst).” (Stăniloae 1992: 101)</p>	Fear

101	<p>“The man fallen in the grey form of existence he no longer knows the fear of platitude (Angst). This type of fear burst up sometimes in the man’s conscience, as a short revelation of the intimacy that sees itself being drown and it wants to save itself. The man has become so much dishabituated of watching his intimacy in its face, and of an own existence differing from the common clichés, than he gets scared by some revelations and he throws himself even more in platitude. This is the fear (Furcht) of something from within world, or it is the fear of losing something from within world. This is the fear of not losing the occasions of pleasure, a fact that could turn him back to his intimacy, to living through himself, or of being deprived of the comfortable support of the world.” (Stăniloae 1992: 101)</p>	Fear
101	<p>“In the Heidegger’s theory on fear, we can find three truths which actually coincide to the Christian teaching on fear: first, that the man’s life on earth is inevitably accompanied by fear; second, that through this fear the human being has been given a shield against the danger of being drown within world; third, that the man has perverted this fear that must defend him against world and to tie him to God, Who is the Source of the authentic life, concentrated in the intimacy of the spirit, because of the man has transformed this fear in a fear of not being deprived of world, in a fear of not being detached from the world or of the existence in the world’s grey horizon, in a fear of living as spiritual being.” (Stăniloae 1992:</p>	Fear

	101)	
102	<p>“The fear of God that is born out of the faith in Him, it would be a invigoration of the primordial fear, a fear characteristic to the man’s spiritual fear, an invigoration of “Angst” - in Heidegger’s terminology. Although, in the primordial state there wasn’t only this fear of the man, of getting lost by being detached from God, but there was also a fear united with the trust in God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 102)</p>	Fear of God
102	<p>“Heidegger avoided to reckon “Angst” as the fear of God, and he reckoned it as fear of World, but not fear of losing the world, but fear of getting lost within world; he reckoned “Angst” as not a fear drawing the man towards world, as “Furcht” is, but a fear that warns the man regarding the world’s vanity. But we reckon that the primordial and fundamental fear of the human being, that of falling in the sin’s automatism, or the passions, of the world, couldn’t be explained without the man’s sentiment that he is responsible for preserving and developing his spiritual character. And the sentiment of this responsibility, the conscience that he will be hold accountable for his falling in the world’s arms, one couldn’t explain without the existence of a superior forum, of a spiritual character too, which the man depends on. If there had been only the man with the world, having to be hold accountable by nobody, for his complete assimilation to the world, the man’s fear of this perspective could have been totally unexplainable. In the fear of being merged to the world</p>	Fear

	(Angst), it is revealed to the man his character of spiritual being, created for being tied to God, Who can save his as spiritual being.” (Stăniloae 1992: 102)	
102	“The fear of sin by getting attached to the world it is actually the fear of God. If through faith we are given a beginning of evidence of the Person of God, through fear it is increased to us the revealing of this evidence and this increasing we feel it as such a strong force than it is able to weaken or to break apart all the bonds tying us to the world: the addiction, the fear, and the worldly care. God, Who reveals us His power in fear, he makes us fearing not to fall in the sin’s arms, or in the world’s arms; He makes us not to fear of losing the occasions to be happy within world. The fear of God overwhelms the fear of world, namely the fear of not losing the world. The fear of God promotes, on the contrary, the fear of not getting us lost within world, by getting attached to the world; the fear of God gives us the fear of world in the second meaning, namely it gives is the fear of world as danger for out true and eternal existence.” (Stăniloae 1992: 102)	Fear of God
102	“In the fear of God it is manifested the awareness about our eternal destiny of not being assimilated to the world. In the fear of God it is manifested the awareness about the nothingness which the world menaces us with; it is manifested the awareness about the fact that the world contravenes to our eternal destiny, a destiny that is provided by living through the own intimacy.” (Stăniloae 1992: 102)	Fear of God

102-103	<p>"In the fear of God we are revealed the awareness of an authority, constituted of a superior to us reality, and not by an inferior one as the world is, the awareness of an authority which we cannot disregard. We cannot do whatever we want, and we cannot sink ourselves within world for we feel the interdiction from, namely a forum which we will be held accountable by." (Stăniloae 1992: 102-103)</p>	Fear of God
103	<p>"In the fear of committing sin, in the fear of falling into the world's arms, which is one with the fear of God, we aren't aware of an immediate danger, but of a future danger, namely of a sufferance that will burden our existence forever. Besides, even the deep fear from within man's nature, that of not being lost within world (Angst) it is a fear of an infinite evil. From here it comes also the infinity of that fear. We aren't afraid of the fact that, by falling in the world's waves, we will actually disappear, but we fear that our existence will become forever insupportable. If there had existed only the world and the total losses from within world, that "Angst" which Heidegger speaks about, it wouldn't have existed. From here it comes out the awareness that the consequences of our falling won't be shown in their whole seriousness until after we will have crossed on the plan of the eternal life. That's why the fear of God is a fear of being us judged by Him, because His judgment will seal our fate forever; it is the fear of the last judgment and of the torment of a non-authentic, non-full existence." (Stăniloae 1992: 103)</p>	Fear of God

103	“The fear of God is undetached from the thought at the final judgment. The Eastern ascetics recommend us to ceaselessly meditate at the final judgment, in order the fear of God to increase within us, and so us to avoid the sin.” (Stăniloae 1992: 103)	Fear of God
103	“As the faith, growing up through the faith that spring out of faith, it experiences some transformations, likewise the fear still persists on the higher levels of the spiritual life, but it gets ennobled.” (Stăniloae 1992: 103)	Fear
103-104	“Some spiritual writers recommend us to think at death, as means of purification of passions. Obviously, not the fear of death scares a true believer, but the thought at being judged by God, a fact that follows after death. The perspectives of a definitive and total death it won’t preserve the fear within man – at most some boredom for the existence’s lack of sense. Only because death brought after it the judgment and an eternal life, one pays attention to death. Thinking at death in itself it is helpful too, at least to the beginners, because of bringing in front of the soul the world’s nothingness and the nothingness of the world’s promises.” (Stăniloae 1992: 103-104)	Fear of God
104	“Thinking at death it makes thinking at God more frequent – which the strengthening of faith started with – increasing thus the inward meditation. Or the fear of and the thought at death aren’t else but thinking at God associated to the awareness of the own sins and to the fear of judgment.”	Fear of God

	(Stăniloae 1992: 104)	
4. The Repentance		
104	“The fear of God, upheld by the awareness of a sinful life, it leads, on one hand, to repentance for the past sins, and on the other hand, it lead to avoid, through restraint, the future sins.” (Stăniloae 1992: 104)	Repentance
104-105	“The purification work is accomplished through the powers emanating out of the Mystery of Baptism and out of the Mystery of the Repentance, as well as the illumination I s an actualization of the powers which we are given with through the Mystery of the Chrism, and the union with God is an effect of the Eucharist. The Baptism’s grace is the man’s new seed. As it grows up, it makes the traces of the old life to weaken, by absorbing that life’s powers and by using for itself. The Baptism is death to the former man, in two meanings: firstly, as deadly wound inflicted to the former man, by laying down the beginning of the new man, and secondly, as gradual mortification of that one’s convulsions which will last for a while until disappearing. But sometimes it happens that the remanence of force still in the former man though he is thrown down on earth, it is reinvigorated through new sins. Then is necessary a new pouring of grace from God, in order the new men to resume with even more vigor the action of purifying the traces of the old man. Better said, when remained powers from the former man have grown up again too much, or when the passions have grown up in the way of	Repentance

	the powers from Baptism so that these ones can no longer advance, the repentance comes to remove the passions, in order to make way to the grace from baptism. We would say that the repentance fight rather with its face towards past, while the Baptism fight with its face towards future. The repentance removes the garbage gradually accumulated within soul, in order to make way to the thriving of the new man born at Baptism. While the Baptism's grace restores our nature's tendencies towards good, the repentance's grace strengthens our nature's tendency towards regretting what we have done wrongly." (Stăniloae 1992: 104-105)	
105	"The powers which we are given through repentance, they bring a new intensification of the work of the powers which are prolonged through the Mystery of the Baptism." (Stăniloae 1992: 105)	Repentance
105	"The Holy Fathers know two forms of the repentance: there is the repentance as Holy Mystery and the repentance as permanent work within soul. But the power of the second one it comes from the first one." (Stăniloae 1992: 105)	Repentance
105	"The idea of a permanent repentance it corresponds to the idea of repentance by and large. If the repentance is a shovel turned backwards in order to clean the man of the sins he has done since Baptism, in order the new man to be able to advance fighting - through the Baptism's power - the temptations he is facing, then it is obvious that we, by mistaking almost on every moment, namely by almost never	Repentance

	winning a irreproachable victory upon a temptation, but only a partial victory, there is needed a regret which to accompany us steadfastly, which to steadfastly humble us, namely a voice which to always criticize the imperfection of the committed deeds, this fact constituting by itself an urge to an even bigger straining of our future work.” (Stăniloae 1992: 105)	
105-106	“Saint Mark the Ascetic comprises in his permanent repentance the ceaseless prayer (I believe that it is about the prayer asking for forgiveness), the banishing away of the evil thoughts, and operation that must always keep us occupied because of always coming sinful thoughts which we must regret and banish them away, and the enduring of the troubles, by reckoning that through enduring the sufferance we are healed up of past mistakes and imperfections. Even when we do a good, we must repent, he says, because of this showing us that we could have done that good even before, and we are guilty of not having it done. The good from today must awaken us top repentance for the good we didn’t do it yesterday.” (Stăniloae 1992: 105-106)	Repentance
106	“John Climacus comprises at his turn, in repentance, not only a regret for the past sins, but also a working of the virtues and a suffering of all troubles. “The repentance is the reconciliation with the Lord, by working the virtues opposed to the mistakes. The repentance is the suffering of all troubles.” (<i>Level V</i> , G.P., 88, 764).” (Stăniloae 1992: 106)	Repentance

106-111	<p>“Saint Isaac the Syrian grants to repentance three attributes: 1) it is the highest amongst virtues; 2) it never ends while we live; 3) it is a means of our continuous consummation.</p> <p>1) Taken in itself, without any doubt, the virtue of the love it is higher than the virtues of the repentance. But our earthly condition doesn’t allow us to accomplish the love in all its purity and fullness – as it also doesn’t allow us to accomplish any other virtue. We realize on each moment that our love or any other virtues or ours it hasn’t accomplished a maximum which us to be content with. After any act of virtue and of love we ascertain that it has been mixed with an impure element, or it could have been even fuller. This fact causes a discontent regarding what we have done, and this is the heart of the repentance. The repentance is the position of judge of our conscience, not only over our own sins, but also over our own virtues, because of us accomplishing those virtues in a not-consummate form. Our conscience doesn’t miss anything; it doesn’t forgive anything; it doesn’t cover up anything. There is no virtue which not to be exposed to the repentance’s severe and unyielding exam. But couldn’t one say that our repentance too, it can be incomplete, and therefore the repentance too, it could be submitted to a judgment of our conscience, which in this case would be higher than the repentance? Of course it could: the incomplete and the impure repentance will be judged too, by repentance too, by a fuller repentance and not by another virtue. The repentance is</p>	Repentance
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the conscience's act of criticizing; it is the self-criticism of the man. As such, the repentance is the conscience's act of judgment and we know that all things will be submitted to judgment. But there is judgment and judgment. There is the judgment one does upon somebody else and there is the judgment you do upon yourself. In the judgment you do upon somebody else there can be mixed the sentiment of pride, while in self-criticism the pride is excluded. In self-criticism there can be at most some lenience. But a self-criticism or a lenient repentance, by leaving the man discontent, it itself tends to a more objective and a more severe one. Shortly, any sin, any non-fullness in virtue, they are submitted to the self-criticism or to the repentance. Even the insufficiency of the criticism or of the repentance, it is blamed through repentance too. In this sense, no virtue stays above repentance and no virtue can avoid the judgment forum of the self-criticism. Thus, the repentance is road towards love, it stays in the service of the love, and it leads from an insufficient love to even more love. That's why there is no contradiction between saying that the greatest virtue is the love and reckoning the repentance as being the greatest virtue. This is for the engine of the repentance is the love.”

2) If it is so, it will be obvious that the repentance follows, or it will have to follow, after each act, after each state, after each word of ours. The repentance follows after sins, and it follows after virtues, which are always non-full. The

repentance tends to become a permanent current in our conscience, an uninterrupted presence, leading to even more love. The other dispositions and acts of ours they change according to the circumstances; the repentance is with each of them, it is the thread tying all of them. Not only the simple conscience that I am the bearer and the author of all my past dispositions and acts, not only the memory I have about them it ties them together, but it is also the repentance or the memory stained with the discontent I have because of the way I did them. No man is indifferent to his past or no man has a purely theoretical knowledge. This would steal from the present moment too its existential sap. The man embraces his past with a palpitating interest. But this full of passion attitude towards past it is one of haughtiness, of satisfaction, and in this case the man wants that not only him to be satisfied with what he has achieved, but he demands the recognition from other people; or it is an attitude of repentance, of discontent. In the last case, the people's praises make him feel bad, because of, on one hand, he knows what little those praises correspond to his inner evidences like, and he know better the reality in what regards himself, because of those praises tend to cover up the reality, to deceive him, to weaken his sincerity with himself, to darken his transparency, either they be sincere or simple flattering.

But this repentance, following us as our shadow, it mustn't

be confounded to a discouraging discontent, which to paralyze all our efforts. This repentance mustn't be a doubt in our greater possibilities, but it must be an ascertaining of the insufficiency of our achievements until now. If it is discouragement it will be in itself one of the gravest sins. Not out of the sentiment that nothing can really be done good, our heinous conscience utters, relentlessly, a critical judgment upon our past deeds, but out of the deep sentiment that one can work even better, out of experiencing some mysterious powers which are much greater than those of our own nature, which can be constantly strengthened by the godlike powers, out of the sentiment that in what we did and in the way we behaved we didn't achieve but only in an insufficient measure and in a pale mode, what we are really capable of doing. The repentance expresses the thought: "There can be better". The discouragement, on the opposite, it says: "This is all I can do. I cannot do better." Properly-said, the discouragement is opposite to the repentance, because of where one cannot expect any better, there the regret doesn't take place. There is a fatalist sentiment, a skeptic resignation. The repentance is carried by a faith in better.

There are two characteristics making out of repentance a forum that is somehow above the man and within man, that always elevate the repentance above the moral and spiritual levels it reaches at. The repentance is a judgment that is always above our accomplishments and actualizations. No

matter what high we elevates us morally like, the repentance will climb even higher. Is the repentance a judgment in the name of an ideal? Yes it is, but the repentance doesn't judge not in the name of a simple, subjectively cogitated ideal. If this had been the case, the repentance wouldn't have filled us up with so much restlessness, with so much unhealed and restless burdening. The repentance is awakened and upheld by the intuition of the presence of an authority above us, to whom we feel ourselves as responsible, but which gives us also power to do increasingly more, if we ask for this. The repentance is to us a transparent towards God, it is the pin which God constantly pricks our heart with, and it is His hand which He pulls us always upwards with. The repentance shows us as being in connection with that Somebody. If we weren't in this relation, we wouldn't be placed with the face or our soul towards a personal and supreme judgment forum, and the repentance wouldn't be explainable and it wouldn't have where to sound within us from, the absolute claims and judgment of the repentance. As we said, the repentance isn't only the judgment upon my past deeds and feelings, but it is also a trust in my greater possibilities of my powers while always strengthened by the power of the infinite God. The repentance was reckoned by Isaac the Syrian as the highest amongst virtues. In this last quality of it, the repentance proves to be standing in a connection with sources of power from beyond man. The

being of the repentance as the being of the humbleness too – which the repentance is not-separated from –, it is of dialectic character; it comprises in itself an intertwining of contradictory positions, which do not reciprocally annul on each other, but they yield a very complex reality. On one hand, it is a steadfast and unshaken trust in huge possibilities. “I am the greatest sinner”, says the repentance’s man, “I am unworthy”. Despite all these, he never loses his confidence, he isn’t by any means engulfed by the thought that he will be lost, and he doesn’t let himself to be sunk in discouragement and in the idleness of the soul’s death. They explain this persistence in the soul’s strength through the fact that the man that repents he trusts God, as a factor differing from him. But the trust is itself an inward power. So, on one hand, one experiences here his own helplessness, and on the other hand, he experiences a great power. Obviously this is a power which isn’t out of the resources of the isolated self, but it is in a communication with the vast and deep resources of the reservoir of universal spiritual power of God. The repentance is a relation with God, but by its character of absolute judge, and by its non-discouraging manhood which it urges the man towards better.

The repentance is the highest amongst virtues for it isn’t in itself a doing virtues amongst all other virtues, but for, by remaining always discontent regarding what those virtues accomplish, it pushes them always higher. Without being a

separate doer virtue, the repentance is an engine of all virtues. If there hadn't been the repentance, there wouldn't have been surpassing within man. The repentance is a ceaseless burning within man which maintains the straining towards better. Through repentance, by trampling the man on himself, and by judging on himself on behalf of the absolute pretensions of God, the man is being elevated always higher.

3) We have reached now the third characteristic of the repentance which Saint Isaac the Syrian grants the repentance with, by reckoning the repentance as a means of continuous consummation of the man, a means that itself consummates ceaselessly.

Saint Isaac the Syrian compared this world to a sea, and the repentance he compared it to a ship crossing us to the shore of the happy life from beyond, in the paradise having a being the love. (...)

The way on this life's sea, if we want it to be a continuous getting closer to the Paradise's shore, to the love's shore – which is Christ Himself -, and if we do not want it to be a wandering without anchor and until sinking in the sea's darkness, namely if we want it to be a way towards consummation and towards life, we will have to go on it ceaselessly in the ship of the repentance for the non-full love we showed through our sins, for the will of a greater love it drives us ever further. The repentance holds us above the huge waves of the evil, or of the egotism arising out of us, and

it takes us ever further. Only in the boat of the repentance we cross over the sinful waves of our egotism which tend to arise from depths from within us and from beneath us. Only through repentance we are always above ourselves and in movement beyond the point where we are on a given moment, by getting closer to the full love and to the Paradise where the tree of life is in, namely Christ, the source of the love nourishing our spirit.

Of course, to some extent, we are partakers to the love that keeps increasing, even before we reach the golden shore of the Paradise's full love. The air of that realm comes in our way with its increasingly richer fragrance, as we are getting closer to that realm. Our love, and by and large all other virtues of us they become increasingly purer, and increasingly closer to fullness, on the measure we are directing ourselves towards the love's kingdom.

From here one can see that the repentance mustn't be separated from the love for God and for people. We will repent only if we have love. We repent for we have transgressed the commandments of the love, or because we reckon that we do not have enough love. Let's not wonder about the fact that the tumult of egotistic lusts and passions, about the fact that the evil by and large, are likened to an ocean. There is a lower kingdom of the evil, as there is a high kingdom of the good, and there is a long road in increasingly overcoming the sins' egotism. The man doesn't cogitate and he doesn't lust the evil

	<p>in isolation. The impulses towards evil from within man they do not have within man their ultimate roots, their ultimate starting point, as also the aspirations and the impulses towards good do not sip their being and power only out of man. We stay in visible bonds, and especially in invisible bonds, with deep and countless forces of the evil, which start out of personal beings more powerful than we are, forces which continuously combine amongst themselves and with our impulses, as we are also helped by aerial winds or urges towards good started out of the high, vast, and great kingdom of the angelic and godlike kingdom, which blow in our being's sails. There are a, ocean of the good and an ocean of the evil, both of them claiming us. But the evil's ocean is dark, tumultuous, killer of spirit, annulling the freedom, killer of cleanness and quietude; it is a black ocean, subterranean, chocking, as a torrent of waters, whilst the ocean of the good, of the love, it is rather as an infinite ocean which we cannot live without, which breeze we cannot advance without, a clean sky or atmosphere giving us a wide, free breathing, which filters within us a renewed life and a ceaseless and untold joyfulness; it is the atmosphere of clean love and communion, life giver, which awakens all our soul's powers and gives them power to advance." (Stăniloae 1992: 106-111)</p>	
111	<p>"How comes that through repentance we gradually detach ourselves from the evil's ocean, from the thousands of its hugs, and we advance towards the kingdom of the full love?</p>	Repentance

	<p>What makes out of repentance a vehicle of love? The repentance is the fire gradually consuming the egotism from within us. All the passions stirred up within us, often triggered out of dark depths from beyond us, they strengthen our egotism. Either be they bodily passions, or soul's passions, they aren't but the heads of the same dragon called egotism. The repentance relentlessly stalks any raising of this dragon's heads, any dragon's attempt to nourish itself, to expand in the soul, of filling up with its stench our soul's well-intentioned thoughts, act, and words, in order to weaken our soul's powers to remain in contact with the love's sky, in order to drag our soul to the depths. The repentance cuts away, with its sword, one by one, the dragon's heads, and it burns the dragon up with the flame of the self-criticism's watchfulness, and it banish the dragon away with the good fragrance of the humbleness. What could more deadly wound our egotistic pride than the perpetual presence of the thought that we are nothing, that everything we have done is bad and worthless?" (Stăniloae 1992: 111)</p>	
111-112	<p>"The greatest and the continuous impediment in the way towards love it s the egotism. Until you haven't totally killed the egotism you won't have true, pure, and full love for anybody. You must let far beyond yourself the waves of the ocean of egotism, in order to feel yourselves caressed from all quarters by the air coming from the love's kingdom. He who loves on himself, he who is full with self-appreciation, he who</p>	Egotism

reckon on himself as being the paramount reality, he won't be able to love others. Loving others means forgetting about you, it means surpassing yourself, and it means reckoning yourself as nothing. The love for others is being consolidated within us through repentance and uninterrupted humbleness. The egotism sees himself inflated to proportions which cover the whole reality. He considers anything as a good that must belong to him, and he weights out any person interested in making that person useful to himself, or at least with the worry of avoiding the danger that could come from that person to his own supremacy. In all his things, in all his actions, the egotist projects his own person, he sees there his own person, he serves his own person, he worships his own person, his god is his own person, or better said his person is to him an idol replacing God. His authentic being is being drowned in egotism. His attention paid to others it is only a tactical maneuver, still serving, actually, his interests. By filling up thus, in a mysterious manner, the whole his horizon with his non-authentic ego, by fencing himself up from all quarters with his liar self, it is obvious that he cannot see others for themselves, in a disinterested manner, with true love, as he cannot also see his authentic self framed in the loving ensemble of everybody. In any of his impulses towards others, he is impeded by his non-authentic self, and any bit of generosity is poisoned by an egotistic preoccupation. The love is the getting out of the magical and illusory circle of the

	selfishness, a circle extended as in a deceiving dream, to infinite. The love means getting out and launching and true relationship, in communion with others. The love means getting out from the dark dungeon of the self and entering the life of community, of solidarity, in the kingdom of love, which comprises all of us.” (Stăniloae 1992: 111-112)	
112	“Obviously, nobody could get closer or to enter the kingdom of love, or this Paradise, except by letting behind himself the ocean of the infinite mermaids of the egotism which are searching for drawing him in as much violent waves. And one cannot overcome this ocean at once. One cannot fly with one flapping of wings from the empire of the egotism in the kingdom of love. This road must be walked gradually, by relentlessly fighting the infinite arms which the egotism tries to hold us with, and to draw us beneath. On each step, we must strenuously fight for in order to cross ahead, as another Odysseus, towards our real country. By strongly oaring, our muscles are being strengthened, and the road becomes ever easier to us. The repentance is the criticizing eye not letting itself deceived by the false pleasure provided by our egotism and it stops us from answering affirmatively the calling coming from the depths of the egotism ocean. The repentance makes us going ahead, and mistrusting what is within us and beneath us. The repentance doesn't let us stop even for a moment. Through repentance, God doesn't let us be content with what we have reached to be, and He constantly calls us	Repentance

	to go further; even more than this, God doesn't let us in the egotism's darkness, but He calls us at solidarity in love." (Stăniloae 1992: 112)	
112-113	<p>"Heidegger said that the man is always launched beyond himself by his worry. The man isn't fenced in the present instant, but on each instant the man goes beyond himself, he is ahead of himself through his worry, and so he has his horizon open. But Heidegger didn't tell that there is worry and worry. So, there is an egotistic worry, which the man preoccupies himself through, with the things needed by his selfishness. This is a worry rolling us further in egotism. This is the worry that doesn't really leads us further, but it moves us around in the closed circle of our interests. This is the worldly worry, the egotistic worry, which the Christendom reckons it as a sin, because of engaging the whole our attention and we are no longer able to think at the true infinite of the transcendent.</p> <p>But there is also a worry of getting rid of egotism, and not a worry for maintaining ourselves in this closed by death life, but of keeping us on the plan of the eternity. There is a worry in the favor of egotism, and there is another worry for melting down the egotism within ourselves. This last worry looks not only forwards, but also backwards. But it doesn't look backwards in order to forget about present or future, in order to get petrified as Lot's wife did, but in order to contribute to the melting down of the egotism residues placed in the past</p>	Worry

on our way, so that we to be able in the future to work better, in order to be actually able to advance. The face of this worry, turned backwards, in order to remove the impediments the egotism gathered as impediments on the way of the future, it is the repentance. Better said, the repentance looks also backwards, regretting the egotistic manifestations and habits, but the repentance looks also ahead, with the decision of no longer serving those. Through repentance we embrace in the same time the past, the present, and the future, by making out of the looking towards the past a force for the future. But the future is being revealed to us as advancing even further towards the luminous realm of the love's kingdom, and therefore towards ever more love for God and for our fellow humans. The worry for myself, that Heidegger was preoccupied with, it is being transformed in care for loving God and the people. And as the repentance embraces not only the past, the present, and the future, but it embraces also our fellow humans, with the embracing of an ever fuller love. The love's repentance is advancing slowly, but strenuously, on the love's realms, according to the full of poetry image created by Saint Isaac the Syrian. And if it is so, the repentance isn't a matter of particular life, but it is a matter of the highest interest to the general destiny of the community. The repentance can largely to contribute making the world more twinned, by consuming the egotism and by increasing the love's dough. The repentance can contribute in a great

	measure to accomplishing a real, theandric solidarity, inwardly and durably, amongst all the individuals of the human collectivity.” (Stăniloae 1992: 112-113)	
113-114	“The repentance isn’t an occupation only for the elderly. Of course their repent too. But the life-creator dynamism of the repentance, the power of continuous surpassing which the repentance gives it to anybody, it show the repentance as having a totally special purpose and a very important one to the young person. The old people repent in order to leave – detached of sins - to God, but the young repents in order to accomplish himself, in this life, as due. And the young man can accomplish himself like this only by continuously surpassing on himself. Properly-said, only thus the young man can reach his real accomplishing of all his possibilities. A young person who doesn’t tend to continuous self-surpassing, a young person living a dull existence, that person is rather old than young. By definition, the youth tend towards more, towards a continuous ascension. But this continuous self-surpassing cannot be accomplished without a discontent concerning the level the young person has reached on. And it isn’t enough a theoretical discontent, but there is needed a discontent intertwined with sufferance. But this means repentance.” (Stăniloae 1992: 113-114)	Repentance
114	“What is the report the permanent repentance stays in, with the repentance as Mystery? Usually, the Holy Fathers call the first repentance as repentance as such, and the second one	Repentance

<p>they call it as confession. From here comes that the first one is a thorough preparation for the second one. Through the permanent repentance we prepare ourselves for the repentance as Mystery, as the repentance as Mystery must urge us to a permanent repentance. If God has given us the repentance as Mystery, it is obvious that we won't be able to go to it unprepared or only by shortly recalling our sins, recalling done in the last moment, or even during the last previous days. How many words and deeds of our, we usually forget! We will risk not remembering our thoughts, or our words, or our sinful deeds, if we do not persevere in condemning them through repentance immediately they have occurred and if we do not always remember them with regret. In the repentance as Mystery we cast out of us the garbage which we are no longer solidary with, which we have detached ourselves from, but which still is within us, even after we have detached it gradually from our soul. Presenting this burden to our spiritual guide, it is necessary to us in order us to experience even more acute the account we must give in front of God as Supreme Person Who is not identified to our inward. The Confession is necessary for us to accept the most accentuated feeling of humiliation and in order to realize that</p>	
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	our escape from sin it depends on the help, on the support which our fellow human gives it to us, that we are supervised ³ by him, that this liberation is a communion's work that exceeds the individualism which the pride stalks us from within. Through confession we place ourselves in the humble situation of disciples who receive teaching. Through confession we give the occasion to hear an objective judgment, a judgment external to our deeds, not leaning either on the slope of sparing, nor on the slope of condemning, as it happen to us almost always, when we are only us with our inside." (Stăniloae 1992: 114)	
115	"Even if we haven't reached to a consummate inward detaching from our sinful thought, when we go to the spiritual guide, by confessing those thoughts it sets us free of them." (Stăniloae 1992: 115)	Repentance
115	"The Holy Fathers connect the repentance to the tears. Actually, the gift of the tears it becomes plentiful on the higher levels of the spiritual life; but as the repentance being permanent it intensifies itself too on the higher levels of the spiritual life, it isn't wrong to regard the tears as being in a special bond with the repentance. The tears mustn't be absent either to the beginner repentance, though there is a	Repentance

³ Father Professor Stăniloae tries to avoid using the word "judged"; in Romanian language *a aviza* it means *to give your approval, to agree with something*. Here is about being held accountable for our sins, by our spiritual guide, who decides whether we can be imparted with the Christ's body and blood, or whether we need to be given a canon of prayers and deeds which we to do for a while, before being admitted to Impartation.

	great difference between the fear's tears from the beginning and the love's tears on the superior levels." (Stăniloae 1992: 115)	
115	<p>"The tears are the proof that the repentance has overcome the soul's callousness which has been caused by the long sinning. The tears take away with them the soaked mud after they have cleaned it up from the soul's window, and thus they open again, to the soul, the perspective towards God and towards the fellow humans, and they bring the soul out from amongst the egotism's walls of sin and petrification. The tears appear after the repentance has succeeded in pricking our heart making the heart sensitive, and after the tears has succeeded in breaking our heart and making our heart soft again, after our heart has become callous due the passion's cement soaked within our heart. The tears give our heart back its transparency, in order the human subject to become visible through it, and in order the human subject himself to be able to see the heavens through his heart. The tears wash the eyes up and make the eyes beautiful, for the tears wash up the heart and make the heart transparent, beautiful, and innocent." (Stăniloae 1992: 115)</p>	Repentance
115-116	<p>"The most subtle analyses of the crying and of all its varieties, we have been offered by John Climacus in the 7th level of his Ladder. We give here a few modes which he characterizes the tears in. By and large, he says: "As the fire consumes the reed, likewise the tear cleans up any seen or spiritual stain".</p>	Tears / Crying

	<p>According to Saint John Climacus there are several types of tears: “from nature, from God, and from enemy; or of praising, due to our vain glory, out of causes of fornication, of love, out of remembering the death and out of many other reasons”. We, by shaking off all the things by the fear of God, let’s gain the clean and not-cunning tears by thinking at death, for there isn’t in them any deceit or self-appreciation, but they rather bring the cleaning and the thriving in the love of God, the washing away of sins, and the setting free from passions. There is no wonder the crying to start with good tears and to end with evil tears. But it is worthy to be praised that crying starting from the contrary of from the natural things, and to reach the spiritual things. That’s why do not trust the springs of your tears before the consummate cleaning. This is for one mustn’t trust the wine immediately after pouring the juice from grapes press in the barrel”. “The one travelling with relentless crying towards God, he doesn’t stop being on every day in holyday, as the one who is in continuous celebration with his body he will receive the relentless crying”. (Stăniloae 1992: 115-116)</p>	
116	<p>The tears banish away the laughter. “Be like a man in your heart, sitting on the high throne of your humbleness and commanding to the laughter: “Go away” and it goes away, and commanding to the sweet crying: “Come to me” and it comes, and to our servant, the tyrannical body: “Do this” and it does it. If somebody has dressed himself up in tears as in a happy</p>	Tears / Crying

	and full of grace wedding garment, he has known the spiritual laughter of the soul". The crying on the superior levels it is no longer a crying of the bodily eyes. "Abolish the sin and it becomes useless the pained tear of the sensitive eyes. In Adam there was no tear before his falling, as there won't be after resurrection either, since the sin will be abolished." (Stăniloae 1992: 116)	
5. The Restraint		
116	"A Romanian philosopher ⁴ issued the idea that the human being is provided with a bridle through his constitution itself, in order not to ascend too high and to menace the sovereignty of the Great Anonymous from the top of the existence. The Christian teaching admits, at its turn, the utility of a brake. But the Christian teaching also affirms that this brake is imposed by the human being himself, in a free manner; this brake isn't a force that the human being is fatally submitted to. And this brake's purpose isn't of impeding our being to ascend towards the absolute being, but its purpose is, on the opposite, to untie the human being from the chains which hold him back from this impetus. In the Christian conception, God doesn't fear of elevating the man to the impartation with His own Being, to the man's deification. This is for the man even becoming God, by the fact that he has a created being he is god by grace, and therefore the	Restraint

⁴ Lucian Blaga, *The Transcendent Censorship*.

	deified man doesn't ever menace the sovereignty of the divine being." (Stăniloae 1992: 116)	
116-117	<p>"The restraint exercised in a free manner by the believer, it isn't restraint from ascending to God, but it is getting us away from evil things, having the purpose of defending the man against totally sinking within world. Of course the world, as created by God, it has its positive purpose. The world helps us in our ascension towards God. The divine rationalities irradiating out of the world, they fill the world up with a light and with a transparency which give our understanding an infinite perspective. Anything, by its never exhausted meaning, by its never fully unveiled purpose, in the universe's ensemble, it always must give our conscience something to meditate at, and it must to elevate our conscience beyond the respective thing. Anything, through the meaning of the infinite and by its rooting into infinite, through its bonds of endless complexity with the meanings of all the things, it is a mystery. All the more it is so the person of our fellow human, which never can be comprised in a closed rational formula, which can never become exhausted in communicating himself and in his thirst for knowledge and love. How much, a fellow human of ours, can help us to elevate ourselves towards the infinite of mysteries through the endless meanings from him! How much, our fellow human fortifies us in our spiritual ascension through his untold and endless powers of encouragement, of trust, which irradiate out of him!"</p>	Restraint

	(Stăniloae 1992: 116-117)	
117	<p>“The world of the persons and of the things is meant thus to be ladder towards God, support during our ascending towards Him. But through passion the man removed this luminous depth from the world, this transparency going up to infinite. Instead of being a “horizon of mysteries”, the world becomes a material consumable content, an impenetrable wall which isn’t crossed though by any light from beyond. Actually, the bodily passions – the covetousness of the belly, the love for money, the fornication – they no longer keep from things and from persons except what is material in those, namely what can satisfy our body’s lust; and the anger, the sadness, the vain glory are also explained by this reducing of the things to their limited aspect useful only to the body. The things are no longer except something to eat, or something that facilitates other pleasures to the body: they take the body quickly, they give the body pleasant fragrances and tastes, they present to the body a material shiny aspect, and they offer the body a comfortable rest; the our fellow human’s person is only a body, capable of offering our body pleasures, or a sum of horsepower, being such useful for producing pleasant things for our body. The things and the persons no longer comprise except what falls immediately under senses, and nothing from beyond senses. They have become opaque. The world has become unilateral, poor, without accents of any order than the sensitive one. The sin against God, against the creator</p>	World

	Spirit, it is a sin against the world too.” (Stăniloae 1992: 117)	
117-118	<p>“This transformation of the things in simple consumable goods and this reduction of the persons to their aspect as objects, instead of making the man freer or more sovereign in the middle of the world, it has made the man the world’s slave, because of making him the slave of the overgrown bodily lusts. The brake which the Christendom urges the man to apply, it is the claiming, by man, of his rights in front of the inferior impulses which have overwhelmed him. Through the restraint that limits the passions, the man restores the leadership and the liberty of the spirit within himself. But by doing this, he awakens in himself the factor that sees in the world something more than simple objects satisfying his passions. Through restraint the man banishes away from him the veil of darkness and the man gives back to the world its feature as being transparent to the infinite. Therefore, in restraint the man doesn’t manifest a despise addressed to the world but he manifests his will of unveiling the whole world’s greatness; the restraint isn’t a total turning away from the world, in order to search for God, but it is a turning away from a world narrowed and thickened by passions, in order to find a transparent world that becomes itself a mirror to God and a ladder towards Him.” (Stăniloae 1992: 117-118)</p>	World
118	<p>“Between the true world and God there isn’t a report of reciprocal exclusion. But like a previous method in order to find the true world it is useful the turning away from the</p>	World

	<p>world, from the world fallen through the man's guilt under the spell of the man, from the world that waits at its turn its liberation too.</p> <p>Here, actually, part from each other the two roads of the Orthodox Christians, the two stages of the faith the Christians have been walking together until here: that of the fear of God and that of the repentance. The monks start walking on one of these two roads while the Christians living within world they walk on the other road." (Stăniloae 1992: 118)</p>	
118	<p>"The monks take the surer, the more radical, and the shorter road. They know that the passions get installed within human being and therefore the human being must fight against himself through restraint. They also know that the human being's will is weakened by these passions and it is better to be eased your fight against passions by taking away from passions the occasion of being born and stirred up, namely by taking away the substance that allows the passions to be formed and to be light up. That's why the monks chose to get out of the world. By doing this, they cut off to the passions, from the beginning, any possibility for the passions to be born and stirred up. The whole problem to them is from now on to persevere in this withdrawal, for the lust by lacking for a long time the substance that satisfies it, or by being deprived for a long time of being prolonged by deed, it withers and it no longer leads to passion, or it weakens the passion." (Stăniloae</p>	Monasticism

	1992: 118)	
118-119	<p>“The road to salvation of the other Christians who are not monks, it is a longer and less sure road, but this doesn’t exclude that some of them will reach the top of the holiness; or, anyway, even if the Christians from within world do not reach just there, any Christian owes to strive himself towards a certain spiritual progress. And this progress depends on some restraint too. The Christians living within world they of course cannot practice a radical restraint as the monks do, but they can practice a certain temperance which, by growing up, in time it will bring them to monastic restraint. If the toils out of our own initiative lack – our willingly toils -, God compensates this lack by giving us a plus of trouble, hardships, and life’s duties, which we must endure unwillingly. If we receive these with patience, they will be able to purify us of passions, almost like in case of the monks. If the restraint is rather a virtue belonging to the monks, the patience it rather belongs to the laymen, though neither of them must totally forget about the others’ virtue.” (Stăniloae 1992: 118-119)</p>	Laymen
199	<p>“The monks breaking with the world is strengthened through three votes: the vote for poverty, the vote for chastity, and the vote for obedience. Through these, they compel themselves to persist the whole their life in this renunciation to the addiction to the world, namely to persist in restraint. In these three votes it is concentrated their promise to restraint</p>	Monasticism

	<p>themselves, not only from the eight passions, but also from everything that can cause the passions: through the vote for poverty they compel themselves not only to renounce to love the riches, but even from any possession that can them an occasion towards manifesting the lust for wealth. In the same time, through this vote the monks keep themselves sheltered against the external possibility of manifesting the belly's covetousness, for they lack the means. Through the chastity vote they compel themselves not only to restraint from fornication, but also from the conjugal bond that can urge them towards fornication. And through the vote for obedience they compel themselves not only to restraint from pride, but also from the right of expressing their opinion when they reckon that the see the things more justly, for this too can be an occasion for stirring up the pride. By cutting of the covetousness of the belly, the passion of fornication, of the love for money, of the pride, they implicitly cut off from them the passions of the pride and of the sadness too, which are upheld by the first ones." (Stăniloae 1992: 119)</p>	
199-120	<p>"By giving his votes and by observing them strictly, the monk must restrain himself radically from each passion in part. Namely, from seven passions: the love for money, the fornication, the anger, the sadness, the laziness, the vain glory, the pride, and even from what can cause each of these passions. In what regard the foods, the monks isn't asked for a radical renunciation, not even for a exaggerate diminishing,</p>	Monasticism

	<p>but they are asked only for a temperance. The monk must run away only from eating too much, from what is beyond measure, and even from getting fed up, by leaving from the table a little before that. But in what concerns the quantities and the types of foods there isn't given a uniform rule, and this is for the weak ones must nourish themselves better, and the ones who are full of vitality they must eat less. The principle is that the food to uphold the body, that is regarded as tool for spiritual work, and therefore the body not to become an impediment either by weakness or by having too much stum in it." (Stăniloae 1992: 120)</p>	
120	<p>"By and large, all the Holy Fathers recommend the monks to eat fasting food, and from time to time to eat only on evening or to totally abstain from food. The fasting foods have at their turn the purpose of weakening the unrestrained power of the lust, which enslaves the man, and it deprives the man of the possibility to see in what he eats something else than the consumable substance. By weakening the lust, the eating becomes an act which is present both the thinking at God in. The rationality is no longer a servant at the lust's will, but it regains its role of leader. Around the act of eating it descends a spiritual light; the eating it is no longer an irrational act closed up in darkness. But the fasting means also an act of extolling God, for it is an act of restraining our own egotism that has grown up through spiritual and bodily lusts, in such a measure than nobody has room around us, not even God,</p>	Monasticism

	<p>this giving us the illusion and making us living so that only our person exists and all the things are for our person. The man suffers a monstrous inflating of his ego, because this egotistic extending isn't a real growth, but it is a sickly inflating wanting to stretch itself over everybody and over everything. This is caused by the convergence of all passions, and it is the manifestation of the works of all the spiritual microbes dwelling in our self. The fasting is an antidote against this pathological extending of the lusts and of the egotism. The fasting is the humble gathering in the self, but through his transparency he sees God, and he is filled up with the consistent life of God. This is the growing up of the ghost from within man, out of the godlike Ghost. Only in God and out of the infinite God the spiritual man can grow up in harmony with everybody and with everything. But the egotistic, by wanting to grow up outside God and outside the loving relations with the people, he only apparently grows up and only for a short while." (Stăniloae 1992: 120)</p>	
120	<p>"Fasting with the body is in itself an act of spiritual growth. It is a straining of the will and a restoring of the spirit's reigning upon the body. In the Christian conception, especially in the Orthodox one, the soul and the body do not live their life in an isolated manner, but, normally, the soul must spiritualize the body and the body must be then environment for the spirit's work." (Stăniloae 1992: 120)</p>	Fasting
120-121	<p>"The Holy Fathers highlight that, as effect of the fasting, in</p>	Fasting

	addition to the weakening of all other body's lusts, especially, the preservation of the purity, The ones who specially need to fast are the young people." (Stăniloae 1992: 120-121)	
121	"The Holy Fathers recommend a ceaseless restraining from all the passions. The restraining from the covetousness of the belly is the one that eases the restraining from all the other passions, by while restraining from one of them we mustn't neglect any of the them because they are a whole, like a dragon to which being cut one head off, it brings up others. The most subtle is the passion of the vain glory. It is there even when we think that we are liberated from passions. It grown right in the place where other passions have been cut off, by nourishing itself with their blood. It remains even on the edge of the humility and, by and large, on the edge of any other virtue." (Stăniloae 1992: 121)	Passions
121	"Fighting the passions we gradually decrease them. Saint Maximos the Confessor established four levels of this progress: 1. Stopping the passions' manifestations in sinful deeds. Obtaining the impeccability with the deed it means dispassion; 2. Getting rid of the passionate thoughts brought in conscience by lusts. The victory upon these it bring us the second dispassion. While this one is missing, one cannot cross to deeds; 3. The third level consists of making our nature no longer moving towards passions. By this we are given the third dispassion; 4. The forth level is the removal from our mind of all sensitive imaginings from everywhere.	Passions

	<p>This leads us to the forth dispassion. By no longer coming into our mind, the passions are no longer able to descend into our subconscious in order to move our lust towards passion.” (Stăniloae 1992: 121)</p>	
122	<p>“The last dispassion isn’t our final ideal, but after it we must become able to receiving within us the icons of the things without these ones stirring up any passion within us. This happens when through things are transparent to us the godlike rationalities. Only after this our mind becomes united with God in a state above prayer (Saint Isaac the Syrian, <i>Word XXXII</i>).” (Stăniloae 1992: 121)</p>	Passions
122	<p>“The decisive moment in the passion’s manifestation it is the assent given by rationality to the passion, and therefore the battle starts here, and not later, when the passionate thought is about to become deed. At the beginning of our spiritual life we do not obtain the success in this stage, at once. But even if we lose the fight there, we will still be able to stop the sin to become deed, by diverse means, amongst which a main one is to take measures in order to lack the occasion to commit the sin, namely to lack the substance that tempts us. And the monk has taken such measures radically, by getting out of the world. Even if he persists only in this state, he has reached the first target. But he is for now only an external monk. In order he to become an internal, spiritual monk, he must reach at least the cleaning up of passionate thoughts, namely to be able to stop his mind from assenting to the</p>	Monasticism

	<p>passion stirred up in his conscience. Once he has reached here, the dispassion of the first level it will be maintain by itself, no longer needing external means or artificially. We must notice that the struggle for this second level of dispassion it isn't totally separated from the struggle for the first level, though having a phase of its own, and this is for the ones who maintains himself perseveringly in not committing sins with the deed he weakens in the same time the sinful thought. Wanting or not, he also build up arguments for the state of impeccability with the deed, and these arguments weaken the arguments which uphold the thought of temptations in conscience. Likewise it happened with the third dispassion, by being partially obtained by persevering in the first dispassion and in the second dispassion. This is for by avoiding the sin for a long time and by weakening the sinful thought, the tendency of the lust for passion it gradually is withered.” (Stăniloae 1992: 122)</p>	
122-123	<p>“Withdrawing from the world it doesn't spare the monk of continuing his effort to restrain himself from sinning with the deed. This is for despite he has exited the world he still hasn't exited the world totally. Partially, the world still goes with him; he still remains in his withdrawal an <i>In-der-Wlt-sein</i>, as Heidegger would say. For instance, the monk takes with him the need for food, and this imposes him a continuous restraint in order him not to become greedy. But besides this, he can be proud, namely haughty for his successes which he</p>	Monasticism

	has achieved through his cleaning efforts, or he can be lazy even in the most complete withdrawal. In addition to this he must live in a monastic congregation, if not all the time, at least for a long time after his withdrawal from the world, in order to learn some restraints from others and in order to habituate himself in obedience and in humbleness. But there he is exposed not only to the mentioned passions but also to the danger of getting angry, of gossiping, of much-speaking, and of laziness; and the lie, when isn't the other's gossip, it is an excuse for the own laziness, or for self-praising, as on the other hand the much-speaking can be too." (Stăniloae 1992: 122-123)	
123-124	"As all the restraints, e them even only from the external sinful manifestations, they aren't only negative actions, but they have positive and inward effects too, likewise the restraint from gossip makes the soul to focus upon himself and thinking at his own tendencies and shortcomings." (Stăniloae 1992: 123-124)	Monasticism
124	"About the much-speaking, John Climacus said that 'it is the sign of the vain glory manifesting through it'. It is 'the proof of the ignorance, the door of the gossip, it is a pedagogue towards flippancy, it is the lie's servant, it is the destroyer of the humbleness, it is the cause of the lie, and it is the forerunner of the sleep'. And the silence has the opposite virtues. 'The one who knows his mistakes he keeps his mouth shut - while the much-speaking doesn't know himself yet. The	Sin

	<p>silence's friend get himself closer to God and by secretly speaking to God he receives the light from God" (<i>Level XI</i>). As through the bodily passions the man looks at world, by emptying himself of spirit, likewise the much-speaking is the angle which the vain glory searches for the people's praising through, and therefore it is also an enslavement of the man to the exterior things." (Stăniloae 1992: 124)</p>	
124	<p>"The monks must restrain themselves from sleeping too much, by forcing themselves to take vigil. The sleeping makes the spirit lazy, and it weakens the spirit's powers of self-disciplining, of focusing, and of dominating the body. And the taking of vigil is a sign of a victory; it keeps the mind's attention strained at the thoughts from within mind and it makes ever higher understandings to arise within heart." (Stăniloae 1992: 124)</p>	Monasticism
124-125	<p>"In all their writing the Holy Fathers ask the monks for, in addition to their many way of restraining from the sin with the deed, a string of toils. Thus, in addition to taking of vigil and to holy readings, they recommend the sleeping on the floor and diverse bodily works. Through these the lust is being withered. All these, together with the range of restraint ways, they constitute the toils of the willing torments, assumed out of own initiative." (Stăniloae 1992: 124-125)</p>	Monasticism
125	<p>"Another external restraint recommended by the ascetic writings is that of closing up the senses towards the things from outside, especially in the beginning, until we haven't</p>	Passions

	<p>become accustomed to overcome the passionate movements from within us, and especially during the moments we feel that such a movement is about to be stirred up. If then we do not pull the curtains over the senses' windows, it won't be possible to restrain some lust to get to the deed. Of course, after somebody has totally liberated himself of passions, that one can look at the things from outside and it is good to him to o that in order to receive divine rationality out of things. Only as long as he is inexperienced, as long as he is a child from spiritual point of view, he must avoid looking at things.” (Stăniloae 1992: 125)</p>	
6. Guarding the Mind or the Thoughts		
125	<p>“Taking vigil and closing the senses up it promotes the mind’s focusing on a meditation turned upon the mind itself. The first purpose of this gathering in itself it is that of noticing its own thoughts, in order to banish the evil though from the first moment they occur, and in order to associate the good thoughts, immediately they occur, to the thought at God, with the intention not to deviate towards evil. By this cleaning of ours of the passionate thought, we are elevated – according to Saint Maximos the Confessor – on the second level of the dispassion.” (Stăniloae 1992: 125)</p>	Guarding the Mind
125-126	<p>“The Holy Fathers reckon that the passionate thoughts are arisen in our conscience mostly by satan, but by stirring up some passions which we have accustomed ourselves to. Diadochus of Photice, by interpreting the Lord’s word that:</p>	Heart

“out of heart proceed evil thoughts”, he showed that our heart, or our mind, it doesn’t conceive by its nature such thoughts, and that if sometimes out of our heart, or mind, there come evil thoughts too, this is due to a habit which he have achieved also under the influence of the evil ghost. But most often the evil thoughts are stirred up by the evil ghost by stirring up a passion of ours. But it seems that *heart* has two meanings. There is a heart as hidden center of the mind, as mind’s face turned towards God, namely this is what we called the supra-conscious or the trans-conscious. This *heart* remains closed to our conscience as long as we are living an inferior automatic life which is closed in the world’s seen horizon. About this *heart* said Mark the Ascetic that it is the inside part of the iconostasis, in which Christ has been dwelling since our Baptism, and that this *heart* can’t be opened except through God and through the understanding hope. From there, from the “hidden temple of the heart” the mind takes the good and beautiful urges from Christ Who is dwelling there” and it prolongs them into a virtuous living. There is another *heart* too. This is the subconscious of the passions. We could say that this is the memory of our passionate vibration and deeds, a memory imprinted in our being, tied to our being’s biological side, as the supra-conscious would be the memory of the spiritualized acts and the potentiality of the superior energies. Both of them are called as *heart* because of being the hidden, central regions of

	our being, one of them belonging to the spirit, and the another belonging to the soul's life tied to our biological side, and what dwells much within us, namely within them, that becomes characteristic and loved. The heart is what is more hidden and more affectionate within us." (Stăniloae 1992: 125-126)	
127	<p>"We could say that in mind, or in conscience, there appear both good thoughts starting from the mind's own supra-conscious, and also passionate thoughts stirred up by the passionate movements which have been memorized by our subconscious memory of the soul tied to the biological. Only for at the beginning, the good heart – that of God – it is known to us, we believe that everything comes out of only one heart, as the today's psychology believes that all the thought, good and evil, they come out of the same subconscious. But as we turn back from the surface life to our real deeps, our true heart it opens to us and it becomes obvious to us that the good things come from where God is within us, and the evil thoughts do not come from the same place, but from an inferior area, which is called as <i>heart</i> only improperly. That's why, on one hand, one can say about heart that is evil, while on the other hand, we say, though, that a man "is evil in his heart"; or, on one hand, that the evil thoughts come out of heart too and on the other hand, that the evil man is "heartless". This is, when the good heart is closed up, namely put out of work; this is for as the work of the "passionate</p>	Heart

	heart” increases, the good heart closes, and vice versa.” (Stăniloae 1992: 127)	
127	<p>“The whole our endeavor in order to clean up our thoughts, which is an important step towards dispassion, we must do it in connection with the good heart and with Christ who inhabits our good heart. Only by directing the good thoughts towards this good heart, thoughts which actually spring out from this heart, and only by relating the evil thoughts - from the first moment they occur - to this good heart, we can succeed in the work of our inward cleaning. By doing this we struggle for the predomination of the good heart, or of Christ who dwells in our good heart. This is for our conscience becomes a battle field between Christ and the evil ghost, through the good and evil thoughts they send through the two hearts. Each one tries to gain the adhesion of our conscience. By relating everything to the good heart, we help to the victory of Christ within us, Who will clean the passionate “heart” too.” (Stăniloae 1992: 127)</p>	Heart
127-128	<p>“Through the good heart works God, through the evil heart work the evil ghosts. The man always has on his right hand the good angels and on the left hand the evil one, sometimes being one of them victorious, and some other times being victorious the another. Both hearts are called heart also for the fact that they both are carried away by an infinite aspiration. But the good heart looks at the infinite of light, being illuminated by that infinite; the evil “heart” looks at the</p>	Heart

	<p>infinite of darkness, being darkened by it. In front of each heart there is opened an abyss: in front of the good heart there is the abyss of life, in front of the other heart there is the black, negative abyss, the abyss of the emptiness, of the platitude, an abyss that also attracts us, but it does it in a passionate way, by deceiving us with the attraction of a false infinity; in the front of the good heart there is the abyss of the endless happiness; in the front of the evil heart there is the abyss of the short pleasures followed by the monotonous endless discontent. The fact that each of these hearts feels attracted by an infinite abyss it determined the German mystics to consider the man's heart itself as an infinite abyss. But ontologically, the man cannot be infinite, but it only stays opened the infinite in front of him, as environment which the man can advance in, which the man can breathe in. In this sense, Christ, Who dwells within our heart, He is the infinite of the life, not-separated from our deeps, for now as virtuality. Opposite to Him, there is the infinite of the emptiness which, by the will of God, it is eternally lived by us, because God no longer fills up with life the individuals created by Him.” (Stăniloae 1992: 127-128)</p>	
128	<p>“The dispassion would be a complete predominance of the good heart, open to the life's infinite, for if the passionate heart is agitated and disordered, the good heart is calm, smooth, sweets, and spreading the resting, feeding itself out of the resting of the godlike infinite life.” (Stăniloae 1992: 128)</p>	Heart

128	“Let’s yield to Christ any innocent thought that appears within us, from the first moment, because any thought is stalked by the “beasts from reeds” (Ps. 63: 31), namely by the evil ghosts, or by our passionate thoughts, which rush out from their hidden places and bites our innocent thought, damaging its beauty or kidnapping it.” (Stăniloae 1992: 128)	Thoughts
128-129	“The innocent thought, according to Evagrius Pontius, it can be either angelic or human. The human thought brings in mind the simple form of a thing, for instance of the gold. The angelic thought associates the simple form of a thing to a good meaning, a spiritual meaning. For instance, the good thought by studying the gold’s purposes, it praises God. But the evil ghost or the passionate thought attacks these good thoughts and associates passion to them. For example, if in the first moment which the man looks at a piece of gold in, of he looks at the gold with a good thought, the evil ghost or the passionate thought by awakening the man’s lust for gold, it bites the good thought and it defiles it, and the good thought is no longer whole and unharmed.” (Stăniloae 1992: 128-129)	Thoughts
129	“We must guard the innocent thought that appears within us in order not to be grabbed by lust or caught in a passionate cogitation”. (Stăniloae 1992: 129)	Thoughts
129-130	“The surest method which we can guard unharmed the simple thought with, or the good thought appeared within us, namely the method which we can stand strong next to our simple thought, it is that of associating the simple thought to the	Thoughts

	<p>thought at Christ, to bring our simple thought as sacrifice to Christ. By doing this, we avoid to be our thought kidnapped and take on the slope of a passionate cogitation. By doing this we have given our cogitation and will a support, so that they can remain faithful to this first form which the thought has appeared in. Thus, the passion takes the cogitation, without us wanting to, on who knows what paths, causing the so-called phenomenon of scattering our cogitation, until we totally lose the control upon our thoughts, and this brings us to an uncontrolled and passionate external life. The guarding of thought it is a guarding done by the mind to itself. Of course, one cannot stop the mind from continuously working. That's why we must always watch upon our mind. And the purpose of this vigil is either for, when receiving the thought, this thought to take place in a pious cogitation, producing associations of pious thoughts, or, when appear other thoughts as beginnings of other series of thoughts, to be they too sent, on the first moment, to the healthy riverbed. This is a narrow path, a path upheld by a continuous effort, a path that is very difficult at the beginning, but that it times becomes ever easier.” (Stăniloae 1992: 129-130)</p>	
130-131	<p>“By always bringing the innocent thought as sacrifice to Christ, at the beginning through the hope that He will make His present felt to us in our heart, because we do not feel His presence for now, we will reach to feel that he is within us, for our heart which He dwells within it will be opened. Actually,</p>	Thoughts

this is the heart: the sensitiveness for the presence of Christ and the steadfast sensitiveness for good. In a concrete manner, we will gain the experience that we have a heart only when we feel the presence of Christ, only when our heart is open in order us to see Him. Until we do not see Christ within us, we will not have achieved the “feeling of the mind”, the “feeling of the heart” for Christ, as Diadochus of Photice said, for our heart won’t have been opened, in order from there Christ to unveil Himself to us, and in order Him to overflow upon the whole our soul’s life, His kindness and understanding, united with our kindness and understanding. Until this openness hasn’t been done, this awakening of the “feeling” through mind of the presence of Christ, we must knock on its door, with the thoughts we sacrifice to Christ, hoping that we will achieve the feeling of His presence and by this our heart it will be opened. This is the only means which we can make our heart to be opened though, in order Christ to unveil Himself within us, the only means which we can find that we have a heart through, and Christ in it, which we can to become “people of heart” effectively. We must exercise ourselves in sensitiveness acts, in order us to achieve the sensitiveness. This is for our heart - and Christ from within our heart - they do not receive any passionate, callous, dirty thought, and therefore they do not open to this sort of thoughts. (...) But the faith, the hope, and the love, they express the state of sensitiveness for Christ of the one who

	knocks on the door of his own heart - for his heart has become through Baptism the home of Christ – with each first born thought.” (Stăniloae 1992: 130-131)	
131	“Our heart has its depths too, as it would be the feeling of Christ dwelling within it, and it has its intensities too. We do not experience all the heart’s depths on its first moments of openness namely we do not fully feel Christ within our heart, at the beginning. There is a progress in this feeling. That’s why the mind or the cogitation that always brings its first thought at the heart’s door, it must try on each time to penetrate deeper in the heart, since the heart has opened to it and it is feeling the mind up with an ever greater more intense feeling of Christ’s godlike infinity.” (Stăniloae 1992: 131)	Heart
131	“There is a guarding of the mind by the mind itself. This has the purpose to defend the mind against scattering, to guard each mind’s thought against being kidnapped by the random or passionate associations. But because this guarding of the mind, which is the same with guarding the thoughts, it cannot succeed in its endeavor except by always bringing the thought at the door of the heart, this steadfast operation it is also called as guarding of the heart, not only in the sense of guarding the heart against something unclean but also in the sense of always being at its door with the offer of good thoughts, trying to penetrate ever deeper within heart. Standing guard at the heart’s door, the mind doesn’t do	Heart

	anything else but guarding itself not-strayed, for the heart isn't else - in the last analysis - but the deeps of the mind." (Stăniloae 1992: 131)	
131	"That heart on whose door one knocks with defiled thoughts, with callous thought, it won't open. That man no longer has a heart, he is "heartless". His heart is so locked up that it has become a simple virtuality. By bringing the good thoughts towards heart, it isn't being actualized only the heart, but those thoughts are being strengthened in good too." (Stăniloae 1992: 131)	Heart
131-132	"By being the heart the dwelling place of Christ within us, by somebody guiding his first born thought towards his heart it means associating that thought to Christ, or vice-versa. The mind oriented towards heart it has the power of keeping each one of its occurred thoughts clean and unharmed by the passionate attacks. This is for the Holy Ghost is in our heart as a "candlestick of the knowledge" illuminating within us. (...) That's why is good for our mind to always be with its attention directed towards heart, namely towards the One Who dwells within our heart. (...) When the mind, instead of being focused on its intimacy, on its hearts where Christ is, it entirely overflows towards the external things, in the regions of the passionate movements from within us, or in the senses' world, it becomes possible the attack of the evil thoughts. Even if it is necessary that the mind to firstly look at the more exterior thoughts, which are brought by lusts, when the mind	Thoughts

	<p>is focused on Christ it looks at the exterior things in its quality as supervisor, as disciplinarian, and therefore the mind doesn't become a slave subordinated to those evil thoughts. Usually, these things take place thus: in the first place there occurs in the conscience a simple thought. Immediately after, somewhere at periphery, there occurs an evil thought, kindred to the tendency of take over the simple thought occurred before. Somebody talks to me about gold, making thus to occur in my mind the simple idea of gold. But, immediately after, in a corner of my conscience raises its head the lust of possessing gold, or the regret of not having gold. The simple thought has stirred up a lust which focuses on another thought. I must associate on the first moment the thought of gold to the thought at God. Thus the passion's thought will be defeated. It cannot remain neutral for a long time. By associating the simple thought to the thought at God, we have rejected the attack. The attacks will appear in an involuntary mode, to any man almost, even if he is on the most advanced spiritual levels. And sometimes, even if the simple thought is guarded, the passionate thought will persist. This happen when the man is strengthened in his addiction to that sin which the bait brings it." (Stăniloae 1992: 131-132)</p>	
132-133	<p>"We cannot always defend the simple thought, the first born thought, against the claws of the beast that stalks the thought. This happens especially when we haven't</p>	Thoughts

	<p>immediately sacrifice that thought to Christ, and when the mind hasn't directed together itself with that thought towards heart, but it has looked behind, as Lot's wife, at the occurred attack, at the lust which has signaled its – presence in conscience. By forgetting a little about itself, and by allowing to be touched by the breeze of sweetness emanating out of the awakened lust, the mind ascertains that the first born and simple thought it has been stolen from it and it has been bitten by passions. The mind can fight even now, in order the lamb to escape with as small as possible wound, or, anyway, until isn't totally devoured by wolf. This battle is harder but it still must be fought. And the help consists still of the thought at God, and still the running towards the heart it can find this help. God won't delay helping us, if we call upon Him with the whole our power. If we see that the thought at our brother it has been covered with hatred, let's not allow this accompanying to further unfold, and let's pluck the image of our brother from the hatred's corner, at least later." (Stăniloae 1992: 132-133)</p>	
133	<p>"There are also cases which the attack occurs out of nowhere, and not as an echo contrary to an innocent thought which has sprung previously in our conscience. In these cases, even the first though has the character of an attack. But this is sometimes such a light, a masked attack, so that we cannot suspect its character as attack. It must still be unveiled from the beginning, until won't become out of an ant a lion which</p>	Thoughts

	we won't be able to get rid of. In order to do this one needs a special spiritual sensitiveness, gained through a steadfast exercise and through a long endeavor of removing the passions." (Stăniloae 1992: 133)	
133-134	"By steadfastly exercising ourselves and through our long endeavor of cleaning ourselves of passions, the Holy Ghost has become within us an actual power, a power overflows out of Christ, dwelling in our open heart, so that this power illuminates all the overshadowed corners of our conscience and it notices on the first moment every passionate movement, be it however weak and camouflaged at the beginning. But even if we haven't reached yet at this sensitiveness of a long living within our heart, or of a living according to the ghost under the influence and the light of Christ and the Holy Ghost, we can defend ourselves by meeting any thought which occurs in our conscience, with the name of God. If that thought is totally innocent, it will be preserved, by this, in that state; if it is not totally free of passion, it will be cleaned up, by being separated the simple image of the thought from the passion; and if it is totally passionate, it will be quenched." (Stăniloae 1992: 133-134)	Thoughts
134	"Guarding the thoughts actually consists of a ceaseless mentioning the name of God within our mind, in searching for our heart, or in focusing our mind on itself. But this isn't else but a focused, uninterrupted prayer; still, this prayer is not the clean prayer." (Stăniloae 1992: 134)	Thoughts

7. Enduring the Troubles

134	<p>“Evagrius and Saint Maximos the Confessor, they said that God leads the man towards the peaks of the consummation, on a positive way, and on a negative way too. The first way, called Providence, it attracts the man upwards in a positive mode, by the beauty of the good, by the rationalities of the things, by the inward urges of man’s conscience and, by and large, by everything God has done and does for us. The second way, called as judgment, it comprises the diverse punishments brought to us by God consequently to our sins, in order to attract us away from evil deeds, and through diverse deprivations of happiness in order to urge us to search for the true happiness even more. As the Providence is a permanent activity of God, likewise His judgment is being exercised continuously. By the first one, God calls us towards the good things, by showing us their beauty, and through the second one, by getting us scared, with the contrary things, like a Father guides his child on the right path; on the right path we encounter positive urges, while on the wrong path we encounter punishments.” (Stăniloae 1992: 134)</p>	Freedom
135	<p>“The Providence’s way is a way followed out of own initiative, by voluntarily assuming the toils, and the way of judgment is the way which the one who hasn’t assumed willing toils is being pushed forcedly on. The first path is characteristic especially to the monks, while the second way is characteristic especially to the laymen.” (Stăniloae 1992: 135)</p>	Freedom

135	<p>“By being the judgment permanently alternated to the Providence, it shows its efficiency at the beginning too, in order to urge the man on the ways of a cleaner life, making him leave a living dominated by passion and to chose a more restrained living. We must highlight here that the method of the judgment doesn’t cease even after some progress has been done in a virtuous life, but on the opposite, it will be intensified after advancing in that life in order to consummate that life. As neither the monk reaches satisfactory results, after some spiritual progress it comes upon himself too, some period of laziness and temptations, which to try him and to increase his virtue of being patient.” (Stăniloae 1992: 135)</p>	Freedom
135	<p>“If the restraint and the watching upon thoughts, usually done in moments of loneliness, it aims especially the passions of the lust (the covetousness of the belly, the fornication, and the love for money), the patience towards the discontents caused us by people and suffering the diverse troubles coming upon us, they are meant especially to weaken the anger’s passions (the sadness and the upset), though they too contribute to an even fuller withering of the lust’s passions. That’s why this virtue has its place after the virtue of the restraint.” (Stăniloae 1992: 134)</p>	Virtues
135-136	<p>“Usually, the successes which somebody has achieved through diverse restraints and by achieving several virtues, they expose him to the vain glory and to the pride. That’s why God established to come upon him annoyances, in order to</p>	Forsaking

	<p>heal him of these passions too, passions which have occurred in a new form after no longer being able to found themselves on motifs of wealth or on other vain brightness. Because of this, the ascetic feels those as some kind of forsaking by God, after he has been feeling God close to him always, helping him in his efforts. Given the positive purpose of this forsaking, the Holy Fathers called it as pedagogical or advising forsaking, and they discerned this forsaking from that forsaking in sense of rejection. This forsaking comprises not only the external troubles but also some inwards discouragements. It is what John of the Cross called it passive purification, which, after the trees of the passions will have disappeared, it will extirpate even those trees' roots, and during which the man lives the sentiment of discouragement and of boredom and that of a void and of a dreadful aridity.” (Stăniloae 1992: 135-136)</p>	
136	<p>“The method of the Providence determines us especially to reject the pleasure’s temptations, namely the lust’s passions, while the method of the judgment determines us especially to endure the trials through pain, which our passions of anger and pride are being weakened through.” (Stăniloae 1992: 136)</p>	Freedom
137	<p>“The term <i>temptation</i> has the general meaning of means which somebody is tried through, or which he is tested through, in order him to unveil his hidden nature. This trial, in order to really cause a self-revealing reaction from the tested person, it must be either attractive or repulsive, namely</p>	Temptation

	to stir up the lust for it or the constraint in front of it and the refusal of willingly accepting it - in other words, it must address to the lust or to the anger... The test that stirs up the attraction of the lust, it is the pleasure by and large, while that one that stirs up the repulsion and the anger it generally is the pain.” (Stăniloae 1992: 137)	
137	“The Romanian language is more nuances regarding the man’s testing and it reserves to the two sorts of tests different words: through <i>temptation</i> it indicates almost exclusively the test through pleasure, reserving to the test through pain the word <i>trial</i> . Thus, when we hear about <i>temptation</i> we think at something attractive, and when we hear about <i>trial</i> we think at something difficult to endure.” (Stăniloae 1992: 137)	Temptations / Trials / Tests
137	“In Christendom, the test doesn’t have only a scientific purpose of making the man to reveal himself. The test isn’t a simple objective experiment, but it has mainly a pedagogical purpose. Through it, the man must not only to know himself, but especially to correct himself, namely: by knowing himself to correct himself. The test doesn’t aim so much to reveal the intensity a man’s lusts and angry, but it has rather the purpose of making the man to overcome his lusts and angry. Of course, as you cannot tell that you have defeated somebody while you have tied him while he was sleeping, likewise one cannot speak about a victory upon lust except he defeats that lust in the moment the lust it has all the conditions to actually manifest its power. If you dominate a	Temptations / Trials / Tests

	<p>passion until nothing stirs it up from its sleep, it doesn't mean you have weakened it neither that you have quenched it. You will be able to say that you have quenched the passion's power only if you, when putting in front of the passion the test that stirs it up, that your passions no longer are stirred up or, even if that passion is stirred up you still can appease it. That's why the tests have, on one hand, the purpose of unveiling what phase you have reached at, in your endeavor of defeating your passions, or what intensity your passion are in, and on the other hand, the tests have the purpose of making the struggle against your passions to become even stronger." (Stăniloae 1992: 137)</p>	
137	<p>"In a restricted meaning, the temptations have the purpose of making us to defeat the lust's passions, or to defeat the attraction exercised upon lust by the perspective of the pleasures, like the trials have the purpose of making us to defeat the passions of the anger, or the repulsion and the reaction which the pain awakens to us." (Stăniloae 1992: 137)</p>	Temptations / Trials / Tests
137-138	<p>"The temptations help us to grow up spiritually by rejecting them, namely through restraint, as the trials fulfill their purpose of strengthening us by accepting them. One can see that the restraint is an easier thing to do, for we can assume the toils of the restraint by our own initiative. Properly-said, one mustn't always wait for the apparition of the external temptation, in order to make the effort of a restraint. This is because of each man bearing in himself the lust, as a torsion</p>	Temptations / Trials / Tests

	spring stretching from time to time towards pleasures, on the basis of the man's memories, of the habit, or of a natural appetite searching for an exaggerated satisfying. Maybe this is the main reason why the man can proceed to a systematic life of restrains out of his own initiative, through willing toils." (Stăniloae 1992: 137-138)	
138	"In the case of sadness, anger, and rebellion, on one hand, the restraining from them is more difficult, and on the other hand, they are only servants to the pleasure's passions. That's why fighting them must follow in a more advanced stage of the spiritual life, being eased by the weakening of the basis passions of the lust. But, besides that, they are almost always stirred up by external causes. The rebellion doesn't have its ultimate source within us, for we do not rebel for the sake of rebellion itself. The rebellion is always a reaction and not a primordial initiative, as the lust's movement is. That's why one must wait for the external causes in order to fight the passions stirred up by them. Then, while the temptation invites us to pleasure, and the trials bring us pain, it is easier to renounce to pleasure than to search for pain." (Stăniloae 1992: 138)	Temptations / Trials / Tests
138	"Actually, we aren't asked for searching for pain out of our initiative, but we are asked to take measures out of our initiative in order to reject or to preempt the pleasure. The primordial and direct cause for the man's falling isn't the running away from pain, but it is the searching for pleasure.	Temptations / Trials / Tests

	<p>The running away from pain it comes later on, because the pain has been brought by pleasure. Therefore one must fight the pleasure in the first place, mainly and directly. As the pleasure is often searched out of an our previous initiative, and the pain is almost always avoided through a reaction taking place when the pain is caused, likewise, if we want to escape the initial initiative searching for pleasure we will have to do it also through a previous contrary initiative, while if we want to escape the reaction contrary to pain caused on the moment the pain appears, we must wait for that moment in order to stop that reaction. It is true that I can prepare myself in advance for receiving a pain that follows to be caused to me. But I do not cause to myself the pain, in advance, or I do not quicken the pain's apparition, but I wait for it to be caused to me. Also out of own initiative I must reach the state of no longer manifesting such an initiative, that of no longer searching for pleasure. I run away from pleasure as reaction to a fact that I expect. But I must wait for the moment of the pain in order to stop my repulsive reaction to it." (Stăniloae 1992: 138)</p>	
139	<p>"The Savior passed the two kinds of tests, in the same order: first, the temptation through pleasure in the wilderness, and second, the supreme trials through pain during His sufferings and death on the cross. Both accepting the pleasure and rejecting the pain the weakness of the nature is being manifested in. This is for the passions receiving and</p>	Temptations / Trials / Tests

	<p>manifesting the pleasure and those ones rejecting the pain, they aren't else but the manifestations of the nature's weakness. Jesus strengthened His human nature, and through that He strengthened the human nature by and large, both by rejecting the pleasure and by accepting the pain." (Stăniloae 1992: 139)</p>	
139	<p>"Actually, in searching for pleasure and in running away from pain there is manifested a nature's weakness, which, on psychic plan, it is experienced in the first case as a difficult to be stopped impulse and, in the second case, as a fear difficult to dominate, and this fear (fear for the life into body) it fuels the worry. Sometimes the fear of pain is manifested so dreadfully so that we can consider it as the supreme trait of passiveness in front of the tyranny contravening our nature's freedom and self-control." (Stăniloae 1992: 139)</p>	Temptations / Trials / Tests
139-140	<p>"Our self-throwing upon pleasure it no longer is only the result of pleasure's attraction but it is a fear of pain too. To the fearful of pain man and who is used to search for refuge in the pain's contrary, in pleasure, not only the pain but even the absence of the pleasure is a pain or a state which he runs away from, fearlessly. And the one who is slave to fear, that one with his nature weakened, it is at the opposite pole than the one having a strong nature. The man who has a fearful nature of who is weakened, he is carried unwillingly, by the world's natural elements and by the impulses caused by everything that fall under senses; he is no longer a person but</p>	Pleasure / Pain

	<p>he is an object easily to be carried away by any wind. The man having a strong nature, by self-controlling himself, he is the free man, in whom the nature from within himself and from around himself it is dominated by spirit. So, the restraint from pleasure and the enduring of the pain, far from being something negative-passive and of weakening the nature, they rather strengthen the nature, and this strengthening means spiritualization or the placing of the spirit in the position of leading us. After all, both the pleasure and the pain affect the bodily side of the body. And the one who has made the spirit to be overwhelming upon his body, he has brought his body to a state which his body no longer vibrates so much in, or with so much sensitiveness to pleasure and pain.” (Stăniloae 1992: 139-140)</p>	
140	<p>“Of course, there are unavoidable soul pains: the lack of honor, of attention, of gratitude from others. But these too, are pains denoting a weakness, which increase the egotistic sensitiveness, the superficial one, that one oriented towards world, of our nature, which, when overwhelmed by spirit, namely by our orientation towards the deep spiritual domain, it no longer vibrates so sensitively. The exaggerated vibration to the sensitive or egotistic pleasure of pain, it is the sign of a fitting of the nature to its external side, of the living almost exclusively on that side, of the forgetfulness about our nature’s spiritual side which is covered together with its horizon. The vibration to pain is the proof of a material</p>	<p>Theological language innovation / unusual collocations / rhetorical catachresis / other tropes</p>

	<p>callousness of the human nature, the proof of the human nature's falling into the biological beings' sensitiveness carried away by instincts. That's why, the voluntary abstaining from pleasure and the voluntary enduring of pain, it means a victory of the will, as spiritual factor, upon the biological sensitiveness and, over all, an overwhelming of the biological through spiritual. The human nature becomes to itself and it becomes to others a transparent window towards the light of the own spirit, and to God, and that light is being poured through the window of the human nature towards the outside world. Being rejected the pleasure, there is no longer the muddy steam covering in a thick layer the human nature's window towards spirit, and by accepting the pain, this one cleans up and absorbs the mud on the human nature's windows." (Stăniloae 1992: 140)</p>	
140	<p>"By restraining ourselves from pleasure we have made the first step towards the spiritual force of the dispassion; by suffering the upset, the pains, and the troubles, we have undertaken the second and more decisive step. For, as I said, the enduring and the restraint do not represent something negative and they do not weaken the human nature, but they rather strengthen it; they set the human nature free from the most accentuated passiveness, that of the almost impulsive tendency towards pleasure and of the totally impulsive contraction when facing the pain. The dispassion which the restraint and the enduring lead towards, or the state of</p>	Dispassion

	<p>lacking of passions, though it is called by using a negative term, it represents, a contrary, in the same time with the cleanness, a state free of passiveness, and therefore it is a full liberation of the spirit and a full self-control. The dispassion isn't an impulse, a neutrality of the human nature, but it is a state intertwined out of all the virtues whose gradual achieving it isn't but a getting closer to dispassion. And the virtue means "manhood", deriving from the Latin "virtus". The dispassion isn't passiveness but it is a focusing of the spirit on the domain of good and of the spiritual world. Of course, this cannot be done through impulses. That's why this focusing is, related to the impulsive agitation, a resting, an appeasement." (Stăniloae 1992: 140)</p>	
141	<p>"The most beautiful apophthegms on the purpose of the troubles have been left to us by Mark the Ascetic and Isaac the Syrian; they are a real theology about troubles. In the first place, through troubles God attracts us away from sins. Secondly, the troubles will often follow to the sins, even if we have confesses the sins. Through troubles is restored the distorted human nature and it is strengthened again. There is a regulated compensation between the willingly accepted sin and the unwillingly coming trouble. Thirdly, the troubles are sent to us in order us to be tested, in order out human nature to be strengthened, and in order us to avoid future mistakes. In the fourth place, the troubles can come upon us even when we haven't committed any sin: for the sins committed by</p>	Troubles

	others. And the fifth thing one must notice, it is that being patient in troubles it is a sign of power and of wisdom and it endows us with power and wisdom.” (Stăniloae 1992: 141)	
141-142	“By and large, the troubles are a necessary part of the salvation’s oikonomia, and the one who accept them will be spared of eternal torments. There is an alternance between joys and troubles in this world. Just the things that had brought you joys, later it will bring you troubles, and vice-versa.” (Stăniloae 1992: 141-142)	Troubles
142	“A wise order guides the destiny of each of us. The joy can make us paying less attention to our duties, and therefore it must be spread upon with a cold shower of troubles, in order us to not weaken our efforts. But the troubles mustn’t last for too long, in order the doubt not to nest within us the regarding that there is somebody taking care of us. From the joy’s hills to the valleys of the troubles, so it passes the spiritual man’s life; but this life records a real progress in this alternance. The joys for having patience are ever cleaner, ever more spiritualized, and ever more not-stained by the self-appreciation; the troubles are ever more steadfastly endured. Properly-said, the joys are appeased by the uncertainty regarding the troubles to come, and the troubles are endured with a mix of serenity, and with internal laughter as Saint John Climacus said, for the certitude of the joys coming soon. So, no matter how changing are the external circumstances which the life of the spiritual man is being unfolded in,	Troubles

	inwardly his life has reaches some kind of leveling, which gives him a steadfast quietude. This is the strength of the spirit facing the world's waves." (Stăniloae 1992: 142)	
142-143	<p>"If in the rush for pleasures and in the fleeing away from pains there is manifested the fickleness and the slippery character of our nature, those ones being consequence of the sins and the sign of the corruption from within our nature, in our nature's steadfastness and non-changeability manifested in restraint and patience are shown the firmness and the earnest of the incorruptibility, which have been achieved according to the example of the Christ's human nature and by His help. Therefore, our nature needs patience exercises, so that the troubles occasioning these exercises either they are consequence of some sins or not. And the world being ordered thus, in order not to be to us only revelation of the godlike providence, of the Giver of good, but also in order to be revelation of the Judge, namely of the One Who wants to strengthen us, through a harsher pedagogy, from time to time. Our human nature asks itself for this harshness, in order not to become lazy; it asks for it until getting fully strengthened in the future life. It doesn't ask for that, permanently, because of not being able to endure it, but only in alternation with the affection signs. God uses the world and the time as grace and judgment for us. Under both aspects this is useful to us." (Stăniloae 1992: 142-143)</p>	Troubles
8. The Trust (<i>in the Romanian language the trust and the hope have almost similar meanings (E. l. t.'s n.)</i>)		

143	<p>“Enduring the troubles can be mixed, in the beginning, with the necessity, with the conscience that there is no other way. But in time there springs out the trust, which later accompanies it and it gives it strength, making it to be totally willing. The man, by seeing how much he must endure, he starts reckoning that there it is impossible not to have in the future some comforting from God, if not in this world then in the world to come. This trust becomes to him, in time, a real certitude. Thus we can define the trust as certitude of the future things, appeared within the person of the ones who trusts. If the faith is a certitude on some unseen actual realities, and if the faith gives the one who believes – when his faith is strong – even an impartation with these realities, the trust is the certitude which somebody has in some future realities and in the fact that he will be imparted with these realities. Consequently, the trust is a faith oriented towards future, of the one who has faith. The hope is the faith in a progressed phase. The trust is a power giving the time transparency, like the faith crosses through the space and through the seen nature. In trust there is a plus of evidence, a plus of knowledge. But where this trust comes from? Is this trust real evidence, or is it only an illusion, coming from a will that has become accustomed to affirm that he knows that the future will be like that, under the pressure of a present which doesn’t give him the expected satisfactions?” (Stăniloae 1992: 143)</p>	Trust
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143	<p>“The trust means a leap in time. Like the man is continuously leaning ahead of himself, towards future, likewise is through trust, but in another mode: through worry the man anticipates an unpleasant future, which he takes measures in order to prevent it, through trust the man anticipates a favorable future which he can no longer wait to reach at. Heidegger didn’t saw in man this reverse of the worry, this “existential” belonging to the man’s nature as much as the worry does. So, as the worry is recognized a gnosiological virtue to, in report with the future (Heidegger, Scheler), likewise one must recognize to the trust too.” (Stăniloae 1992: 143)</p>	Trust
144	<p>“When affirming about trust that it equally belongs to the man’s nature as the worry does, we do not understand that they actually coexist on each moment within the man’s soul. At least the religious trust, the trust in happiness in the future life, the more it is present within soul the more the worry is absent, and vice-versa. About the trust in a future on earth one cannot say this except in a smaller measure, and this is only for this trust doesn’t comprise so much certitude as the religious trust does. Thus one can say that the trust and the worry have a sole root within man’s being: the preoccupation with the future. But when out of this root there grows up the fruit of the trust, namely of the certitude in the hoped future, there no longer grow up the fruit of the worry, at least not of the worldly worry, but only that of the care to</p>	Trust

	not compromise the obtaining of a sole things. And the fruit of the worldly worry grows big where hasn't grown up the trust's fruit." (Stăniloae 1992: 144)	
144	"By attentively comparing the trust and the worry, we ascertain that the cause of their impossibility of actually coexisting it consists of the fact that while the trust comprises evidence the worry comprises incertitude. That's why the incertitude of the worry is present where the evidence and the serenity of the trust are absent. This is because the care serving the trust it isn't fuelled up by the incertitude of the worldly worry, but it pays attention only to not lose a thing of the sure trust." (Stăniloae 1992: 144)	Trust
144	"The certitude of the trust in the future goods which God will give us, and the incertitude of the worldly worry, are shown by the quietude provided by the first one and by the restlessness caused by the second one. Presenting in other terms this contrast between trust and worry, Saint Mark the Ascetic said: "The trust in God widens our heart (or it is the heart's widening); and the bodily worry narrows our heart (or it is the heart's narrowing)" (<i>The Romanian Philokalia</i> , p. 263)." (Stăniloae 1992: 144)	Trust
144	"One can experience the narrowing of his heart in time of anxiety, while that of widening his heart one can experience it in times of quietude. And the anxiety regarding the future it is the fruit of the uncertainty, while the quietude is the fruit of the surety. The worry is the calf of the fear of future, namely	Trust

	of the uncertainty, of the fear that the future won't be as we want it." (Stăniloae 1992: 144)	
144-145	<p>"In his writing <i>About Baptism</i>, Mark the Ascetic repeats for several times that the heart which Christ dwells since Baptism in, it cannot be opened except "through Christ and through the understanding trust", namely through the seer trust of the unseen things, or from the other life. Then the heart is really opened, for no longer being dominated by the worry for the self. And only when the trust has become dominating upon us and, by it, the openness of the heart, we get rid of the worldly thoughts, or of the worry's thoughts. So, the openness of the heart corresponds to a victory of the trust within us, and to getting rid of worry and of its thoughts. This heart's openness it is openness towards the supra-world evidences. The trust is a seeing with the heart, with the deeper part of our spirit, and therefore is an intimate conviction, a mysterious one, a state of transparency of our being towards the things from beyond this world." (Stăniloae 1992: 144-145)</p>	Trust
145	<p>"If the worry is and "existential" so structurally tied to the man's nature in the state from after falling, what is the wonder that will make the man to get rid of it, better said to be transformed in the "existential" of the trust? How could have been possible to be the hunch of an unsure future to be transformed in the hunch of an unsure future, namely the uncertainty to become certainty? The process of this</p>	Trust

	<p>transformation couldn't be initiated from the bosom of the worry itself. This cannot be explained except through the intervention of a power differing from the human power, or by getting the deep of that superior being in touch, somehow, with the trusted reality. Thus, the trust cannot be only an illusion. If it was the opposite, why wouldn't everybody give this illusion to themselves? In trust we experience a surety that doesn't depend on our will and that doesn't have only the strength we can give to it. The strength of the trust has grown within us from elsewhere and it imposes itself upon our will, or like a plus over what we can. We haven't the trust before, we haven't felt it within us, though we maybe weren't despaired either. From a while, we have noticed that within us the trust has been becoming increasingly firm in the trust in the future things, as surety filling us up with increasingly more quietude. Parallel to this, the poisoned sap of the weeds who were growing in the hard soil, and under which was hidden our heart, they are getting withered and no matter how much we would want to take seriously, as the people around us do, the life's worries, we no longer are able to do that." (Stăniloae 1992: 145)</p>	
9. The Gentleness and the Humbleness		
145-146	<p>"Gentleness and humbleness are the flowers springing up from enduring the troubles and out of trust. The gentleness is born after through patience there have been eliminated from the human nature the anger's passions. The gentleness stays</p>	Gentleness and Humbleness

	<p>immediately before the humbleness. “Like the dawn light precedes to the sun, so the gentleness is the forerunner of the humbleness”, said Saint John Climacus. The gentleness is a steadfast mood of the mind remaining unchanged when facing the honors or the reproaches. The gentleness means remaining unaffected by the upsets brought to you by your neighbor and to sincerely pray for him. The gentleness is the rock raising above the sea, remaining unmoved by the sea’s waves.” (Stăniloae 1992: 145-146)</p>	
146	<p>“Through gentleness we get closer to love, which stays at the final end of the virtues. While the love is opposite to egotism manifested through passions, through gentleness we have reached the benchmark of the love. The gentle man has removed from within himself all the causes upholding his separation from people. Through gentleness he has taken the decisive step towards unifying the human nature from within himself with the human nature from within others. The gentleness anticipates the smooth breeze of the dispassion, namely of the quietude that is in the same time the absence of the egotistic passions. The ones reckoning that the gentleness is a weakness, they can think at the gentleness’s force of healing the human nature and of filling up the precipices from within the selves, at the good spell from within the gentleness, a spell attracting all the ones who otherwise tend to separate themselves and to put a distance themselves. Really, the man who is gentle is the only one gaining the</p>	Gentleness and Humbleness

	victory upon earth.” (Stăniloae 1992: 145-146)	
146-147	<p>“Through gentleness the soul gets closer to simplicity, which is the ideal of the human being. The gentleness also helps us to understand the infinite beauty and richness of positive content that is in the simplicity. The simplicity is a deep and more comprising wisdom, coming from transposing the man who is gentle in everybody’s situations. Just because of this much comprising wisdom, the gentle soul no longer gets disturbed and no longer crosses from a state to the contrary state, for it judges each situation in a more wider light, by taking in account so many considerations unknown to the passionate soul or which are intentionally forgotten by the passionate soul because of being, such a soul, obsessed with his unilateral passion. The much wise simplicity of the man who is gentle, it is due right to his lack of passions. On one hand, the man who is gentle doesn’t have passions to hide, and on the other hand nothing impedes him to judge objectively, nothing urges him to crook his judgment or to pretend forgetting something. The cunning one is always in a state of duplicity, saying something but thinking something else, in order to cover up the ugliness of a passionate intention. He judges narrowly or crookedly and that’s why he presents covertly each situation, as his momentary interest asks for it. He makes the impression of being smart. But his smartness is the art of falsifying and of covering up the truth, of presenting the crooking up of the true realities as</p>	Gentleness and Humbleness

	<p>knowledge. His art is that of giving the darkness an appearance of brightness. The cunningness of the evil man it doesn't obey the realities from beyond his egotistic ego, whilst the wisdom and the simplicity of the man who is gentle it is watered by the springs of the truth widely open in front of his mysterious intimacy." (Stăniloae 1992: 146-147)</p>	
147-148	<p>““The humbleness is a nameless grace of the soul” (<i>The Ladder, Step XXV</i>). The humbleness is the opposite of the pride, the pride being the most resilient amongst passions. As the pride apparently elevates us, but in reality it lowers us to the deep of the hell, being the most awful evil, the humbleness, by apparently lowering us, it elevates us on the higher level, occupying, as virtue, its place immediately before dispassion and love. While the pride as egotism is the source of all passions, the humbleness is the concentration of all virtues. If the pride tears the human nature apart in as many pieces as individuals exist, the humbleness gathers the human nature back. If the pride deforms the judgment and it darkens the just contemplation of the reality, the humbleness restores the just seeing of all things. Each virtue equals to an increase in will. But this increase in will is founded on an increase in seeing the things justly, as the Holy Fathers said. The passionate man, if he has done something out of a personal interest, he will try to justify his deed through a general interest. The passionate man changes his entire conception about a certain sector of the life by pursuing that</p>	Gentleness and Humbleness

	sin and he tries to convince others too, that they should work likewise, although until yesterday himself was preaching another conception. He doesn't admit that the objective truth is other, for he has sinned due to his weakness towards that truth, but he tries to crook the truth and the general guidance norm in order everybody to adopt his point of view." (Stăniloae 1992: 147-148)	
148	"While the passions crook the way of seeing the things because of adapting the general and objective order of the things to an egotistic, private interest, each virtues, by being an overcoming of a passion, and therefore of the egotism too, it bring an increase in correctly seeing the things." (Stăniloae 1992: 148)	Gentleness and Humbleness
148	"The humbleness, as the highest and the most summarizing amongst virtues, by opposing the egotism – which is the source of the passions -, it is the fullest restoration of the true understanding of the natural reality, leaving to the love to understand the things from above nature." (Stăniloae 1992: 148)	Gentleness and Humbleness
148	"Because fighting the pride it doesn't start only after the victory over the other passions, but it starts right in the beginning, for, in a certain regard, even the fight against the other passions it means fighting the pride's egotism, or it must be accompanied by it, the humbleness has, according to Saint John Climacus, several stages." (Stăniloae 1992: 148)	Gentleness and Humbleness

149-150	<p>“The The humbleness means being aware of and living the supreme divine infinity and our own smallness. It means in the same time being aware of the fact that the divine infinity crosses through everything and through everybody from around us. That’s why we said that the humbleness is a huge increase in knowledge. The humble man bends down before his fellow human as before God. While the pride covers to our eyes the infinite of the reality of God, the humbleness unveils it. That’s why, no matter what we would do, as long as we lack the humbleness, as long as there is a trace of pride within us, we won’t have the thrill of being in contact with God, neither are we aware of our depth in God nor we make others to feel that. Where the humbleness is absent, there is shallowness, there is platitude, there is a closed horizon, and there is the poor haughtiness making us smiling with mercy. In the undefined and full of mystery deeps, In God, and lives only the humble one. Salt (edifying meaning, seriousness) have only the humble one’s deeds and attitudes. You must make yourselves totally small, until reckoning you as nothing, in order to see the greatness of God and to feel yourselves humbled by His work. The humbleness is the most widely comprising wisdom. The humble one, far from becoming spiritually poorer, he embraces from infinite more than anyone and he offers this to the other too. The proud one he comprises smoke. The humbleness is the valley of the rich crops sipping their power out of the infinite’s sap.</p>	Tropes: Metaphor, Comparison, Abundance of Epithets
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	<p>The pride is the barren rock battered by the nothing's blizzard, drying the life out. The humbleness is the supreme transparency of the human nature after banishing away the passion's clouds, a transparency penetrating every faculty of the soul. Through passions, which have as hidden engine the pride, the man is always placed before his own sight; he doesn't see the reality and the work of God, for it is covered by his own self. He is, to himself, mist and smoke. His passions are the sick concretions of his ego, impeding him seeing the reality. And these concretions do not obstruct only his ability to see the reality differing from him, but they obstruct also his possibility to really see himself. The swell of the ego, of the smoke emanated by the ego, it is placed between his sight and his real self, and he considers himself what he, in reality, isn't. The mind's getting outside itself, the ecstasy – in order to see God – don't they mean just this humble forgetting about the self when facing His overwhelming reality? This is for, in order to know something, you must forget about yourself since you aren't but an instrument of seeing, of receiving the infinite reality, or not even a self-standing instrument. You are a worker in a vine that doesn't belong to you, and also you are a worker only due to your Master benevolence.” (Stăniloae 1992: 149-150)</p>	
150	<p>“The humbleness, though seeming as a self-reduction to nothing, it actually is a turning back of our human nature to</p>	Gentleness and Humbleness

	<p>the state of being a window to the infinite and an empty room meant to be filled up with the godlike light. The window actually doesn't exist for itself, and the room which God conveys the light to, it doesn't see anything without light. Likewise the man, only by accepting this role of not being but a reflector and a receiver of the godlike light, he can have a great destiny: that one of cohabiting with the infinite. If the man feels shame for this role, and if he fills himself up with his own smoke, he won't be able to see anything of himself too." (Stăniloae 1992: 150)</p>	
10. The Dispassion of the State of Lacking Passions		
150	<p>"The dispassion is the peak which the whole effort of the asceticism and which all the levels of the virtues lead towards, for the whole asceticism has as its direct purpose the purification of the body and of the soul of passions." (Stăniloae 1992: 150)</p>	Dispassion
150	<p>"The dispassion isn't a negative state, for the absence of the evil cannot be reckoned as a negative state. The dispassion is "a state of peace of the soul". The one who has reached the dispassion he no longer easily commits sin with the deed, neither with the thought, nor his anger and lust easily moves towards sin. That one has almost totally quenched the passions from his soul's faculties of the anger and of the lust, and neither can he be easily stirred up by the memory of his sinful deeds. We couldn't say that the passions have become to him almost an ontological impossibility, as they are to God. But the passions are to him an almost a moral impossibility,</p>	Dispassion

	as, for instance, about a man who avoided stealing for decades, it is impossible to think at him as indulging himself to such a deed.” (Stăniloae 1992: 150)	
151	“The dispassion would be that state of the soul, which the soul overcomes any temptation in. Immediately the soul has accepted the temptation either from inside or from outside, that soul has fallen from the state of dispassion. Of course, though this state has become a habit, it still hasn’t become an inalienable state of the human nature, as it is to angels, or as it will be to us in our future life; though being mostly facilitated by the habit penetrated within human nature, the dispassion still needs the support from will. So, one can lose his dispassion anytime, though this has become very improbable, almost a moral impossibility. Usually, we are not at once consolidated in the state of dispassion, but by repeated elevation to it, after ever shorter falling from it, each time remaining increasingly more in it. That’s why Saint John Climacus, when declaring the dispassion as “the heavens from the mind’s heart that looks at the devils’ plots as to some toys”, he admits several degrees of dispassion. According to him: “there is dispassionate man, but there is another more dispassionate than the dispassionate one. The first one strongly hates the evil things, while the second one enriches himself endlessly in virtues.” (Stăniloae 1992: 151)	Dispassion
151	“The state of dispassion will imply a positive strength, if it is capable of defeating any passions. This is no other strength	Dispassion

	but that one of the virtues. “That soul has the dispassion that is imbued with virtues. The dispassion isn’t but the shirt of the total cleanness woven out of all virtues.” (Saint John Climacus, <i>The Ladder, Level XXIX</i>)” (Stăniloae 1992: 151)	
153	“The dispassion is the previous condition for contemplation, which is the direct purpose of the entire purifying asceticism. Of course, the total absence of the passions it still isn’t equivalent to the contemplation of God. The contemplation of God needs a special unveiling of God. This unveiling cannot take place until the soul’s eyes of the man still are disturbed and as long as the man’s preoccupation is still attracted by passions. The absence of the passions gives the man the capacity to look at things and to remember the things in their simple meaning, without associating them to some passionate interest.” (Stăniloae 1992: 153)	Dispassion
153	“The state of dispassion doesn’t mean also a state of permanent contemplation of God. It is right that, without the permanent thinking at God, without remembering His name, the state of dispassion cannot be achieved and it can be preserved only with great difficulty. But this remembrance of God it doesn’t totally remove the other ideas from the man’s mind, neither it absorbs them, nor make them to disappear; they even aren’t to the mind a permanent transparent which the mind to contemplate God through.” (Stăniloae 1992: 153)	Dispassion
153-154	“The lack of disturbance of the state of dispassion, it mustn’t be understood, except for a few moments, as a total	Theology

disinterest in the world. But it excludes the egotist interest. In this sense the dispassion is a disinterest. But it doesn't totally exclude the general interest, that of the love. A contrary, the love in all its amplitude, it appears after one has achieved the dispassion. That's why, as the dispassion isn't the ultimate purpose, but it is searched in order to achieve the contemplation, and immediately one has penetrated the dispassion area there starts showing the contemplation too, likewise the dispassion is searched in order to achieve the love. We clean ourselves up of the egotism's passions, in order to achieve the love's altruism, and the clean love appears immediately after the dispassion occurs, and then it continues growing up as we progress in dispassion. This is the great and the radical difference between the Christian love and the Buddhist apathy. In Buddhism, the one who has reached the apathy he becomes totally disinterested in people, because of his worry not to be his egotistic quietude disturbed. That's why, no matter how total the Buddhist disinterestedness would be presented, it still hasn't eliminated the gravest thing: the egotism. The Christian dispassion, a contrary, it is a generous disinterestedness: through the passions it has successfully quenched, it has understood a precise thing: the callous manifestations of the egotism, which has become almighty. Only by these the Christian doesn't want to be disturbed. The dispassion the Christian is searching for, it is right the condition for the

	<p>apparition, for the activation, and for the growing up, in an unhindered manner, of the disinterested love. The endeavor for dispassion it is the endeavor for plucking off the tares impeding the love's wheat to grow up; it is a breaking through the walls of the egotism from our soul, in order the soul to can be really useful to others, and not for an even more total locking up of the soul within the walls of the total indifference." (Stăniloae 1992: 153-154)</p>	
154-155	<p>"The dispassion was reckoned by Evagrius Pontius and by Saint Maximos the Confessor, on one hand, as that state of the soul allowing the soul to receive and to think at the things in their "simple" meaning, namely not-conjugated with a passion, and on the other hand, as state that doesn't exclude the love, but it implies the love. These two requests are completed on the following way: the absence of the passion in looking at and in thinking at things, it means the absence of the egotism. The dispassionate no longer looks at and no longer thinks at the things from the perspective of the passion that needs to be satisfied by those things; the dispassionate no longer does out of things exclusively objects related to himself, or simple means of his unsatisfied egotism. To the dispassionate, the things no longer appear as gravitating around him, but they appear to him as having their purpose independently from his egotism. The human persons appear to the dispassionate as being, who have purposes in themselves, and who ask him for help. Of course, the</p>	Dispassion

	<p>dispassionate doesn't stop here. Through the meanings of the persons and of the things he will see God; he will see the persons and His things and as His requests. But it is previously necessary for him to see that he isn't the center of all things, in order to be set free from the illusion that the things gravitate towards him, and in order to ascertain then that the things gravitate towards God. And by looking at God, he then sees the things as being eternal into God and, as he loves God, he loves them too, as gifts from the divine love and wisdom. But this seeing of the world in its "simple" meanings, with disinterested love and, implicitly, with interest in his salvation and in the salvation of his fellow humans, it doesn't cause him a disturbance as that caused by the egotism's passions. The dispassionate knows that he influences his fellow human more by his quietude, as sign of his deep certitudes, as example of the strength given by the trust in God and by the cleaning of passions. The dispassionate works for the people's salvation, with the steadfast trust in the plan God has for each soul." (Stăniloae 1992: 154-155)</p>	
155-156	<p>"The disturbance is characteristic to the passionate, because his egotism gives him the sentiment that he is alone, justified only by his powers. But the one who knows that God takes care of everything, he no longer is submitted to disturbance and to worry. The dispassion, far from being opposite to love, it is dispassion just because it is steadfastness in love. In fact, the big disturbances come upon us out of the suspicions or</p>	Tropes: Metaphor

	<p>out of the news that others would harm us, that they would undermine us. It is hidden here the same choked awareness of the own loneliness and of the danger represented to me by the others' plots, given my loneliness. But the one who has deep trust in God he no longer fears the people, and so he has no reason not to love the people. The dispassion is lack of disturbance for upon it blows the breeze of the love and as it advances in this zone it becomes increasingly consolidated. The dispassion is lack of disturbance for it is full, like the love too, of divine power. The quietude of the dispassionate one grows up out of the conscience and out of experiencing the divine power penetrated in all his things. The strength of maintaining himself clean in everything, of living in the fullness of the virtues, and of not being disturbed by anything, he has it from Christ, Who lives in him, "guiding him in all his words, deeds, and cogitations" (<i>The Ladder, Step XXIX</i>). (...) The dispassion takes us in the most inner place of the mind, within heart, where is Christ, and where don't hiss and aren't restless the passions' winds, but where are moving the serene and conquering breezes of the love." (Stăniloae 1992: 155-156)</p>	
156	<p>"The nature's getting out of the passions' writhing, by being the sign of a strengthening and by having as consequence a strengthening, it is the beginning of experiencing that incorruptibility brought By Jesus Christ to the human nature, it is the earnest of the resurrection." (Stăniloae 1992:</p>	Resurrection

	156)	
156	<p>“The dispassion can reach dizzying heights. Through victory upon passions, as effects’ exaggerated and contrary to nature movements, one can be elevated even above the natural affects and needs, at least intermittently, anticipating the state he will have after resurrection, when the body won’t need anything, when we will live only spiritual joys as pure minds, when will no longer be any sadness or pain. This is the saints’ lives, who can lack for a long time even the strictly necessary food, and who aren’t harmed even by the viper’s bite. The dispassion means, in the first place, the restoration of the human nature from its state of illness which the passions lowered it at, and then to be elevated above nature.” (Stăniloae 1992: 156)</p>	Dispassion
The Second Part		
The Illumination		
1. The Gifts of the Holy Ghost		
157	<p>“Until we haven’t cleaned ourselves of passions, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which we have received at Baptism through the Mystery of the Chrismation, though they covertly work in each virtue, they won’t fully show themselves. But since have been removed the passions which have been covering them, the gifts of the Holy Ghost burst up in our conscience, from the heart’s hidden place, in the whole their brightness. Actually, these gifts, unlike the Baptism’s grace which leads</p>	Gifts

	<p>the work of mortification of the former man and of general growth of the new man, they are meant to restore and to intensify the soul's powers of knowledge and of manly persevering in God, after the soul has known Him. They are first of all gifts of mind's illumination and, just because of that they are gifts for strengthening the mind in its orientation towards God. That's why these gifts fully show their efficiency only when within us there have been sufficiently developed our intellectual powers which collaborate with the gifts of the Holy Ghost. By being the fruits of a Mystery sharing us the gifts of the Holy Ghost, they are meant to open the ghost from within us and to make rich the life "in Ghost", but this cannot be accomplished before our purification of passions." (Stăniloae 1992: 157)</p>	
157	<p>"Only after the finishing of the work of purification, lead especially by the powers of the Baptism and of the Repentance, in the foreground appears the work of the gifts of the Holy Ghost." (Stăniloae 1992: 157)</p>	Gifts
158	<p>"The soul doesn't remain only with the gifts he has received at baptism and Repentance, but the beginning of activation of the gifts of the Holy Ghost means also an activation of His unmediated influence. Where the grace of the gift is, there is the Ghost too – that's why are used alternatively the expressions: the grace and the Ghost. Through the Mystery of the Holy Chrism, the Holy Ghost has created a dwelling place in the hidden center of our being. The Ghost has remained</p>	Gifts

	always in contact with us since then.” (Stăniloae 1992: 158)	
158	<p>“The Baptism’s grace sets in work the gifts of the Holy Ghost, in the work of penetrating the thick layer of passions, for at the end to gush up, through the operated opening, their light, namely the light of the Holy Ghost on the deep realm of our being. But this light becomes increasingly transparent even before gushing up visibly at the end of the total cleaning of passions. Through each virtue, which is achieved after the each passionate layer from within us, it becomes more transparent. But firstly we feel the power that works within us to this cleaning. Namely, the Holy Ghost shows, in the beginning, more His power, and then he shows more his light, until the full gushing up of the illumination in our conscience. Thus we must understand that, our of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost: the ghost of the fear, the ghost of the strength, the ghost of the advice, the ghost of the science, the ghost of the knowledge, the ghost of the understanding, and the ghost of the wisdom, the first two indicate almost exclusively the doing power: of the fear, by abstaining from evil deeds; of the strength, by urging us towards committing the good things. From this initial phase, for the time being, it is absent the clear knowledge. This comes later, being represented by other five gifts of the Holy Ghost.” (Stăniloae 1992: 158)</p>	Gifts
158	<p>“After we have progressed a little in achieving the virtues, it starts getting red the horizon of our conscience for the</p>	Gifts

	advances of the illumination, as on the peak of the dispassion to rise up wholly the sun of the Holy Ghost.” (Stăniloae 1992: 158)	
158	“Saint Maximos the Confessor interpreted the gifts of the Holy Ghost like this: after ceasing to commit sins by <i>fear</i> and after working the virtues by <i>strength</i> , we achieve by <i>the gifts of the advice</i> the habit of the discernment, which helps us to fulfill with the best judgment the godlike commandments and to discern the best fitted deeds to each circumstance. So, if at the beginning we rather work because of the fear of God, fulfilling the commandments for the simple fact that God has given them, later we will start to understanding by our own judgment that what God commands us it is a good thing, and what He stops us from doing, it is a bad thing. In the same time we start understanding that it is more appropriate to fulfill the commandments in each circumstance.” (Stăniloae 1992: 158)	Gifts
159	“From the first glitter of light – (namely from fulfilling the commandments by fear, E. l. t.’s n.) – we progress to an increased light by the <i>gift of the science</i> , which teaches us what to accomplish the good like, as it has been unveiled to us in commandments, in order us to achieve the virtues. This is because of being possible that somebody to realize the good comprised in commandments and still not to know what to do that good like, in the most satisfactory mode and that one might work recklessly. The gift of the science it is therefore	Gifts

	that one that teaches us what to commit a good thing like, with right judgment.” (Stăniloae 1992: 159)	
159	“Next in line is the <i>gift of the knowledge</i> which, unlike the gift of the advice, it no longer discerns only in a general manner the good from within a commandment, or the evil from another commandment, but it unveils the rationality or the deeper motivation itself of each commandment and of each virtue. Now we do not only know by and large that it is better to be humble than arrogant, but now I realize that through humbleness I reach to see the greatness of God, whilst the arrogance blinds me off, not allowing me to see anything else except me.” (Stăniloae 1992: 159)	Gifts
159	“From the gift of the <i>knowledge</i> we are elevated to the gift of the <i>understanding</i> , which transforms the rather theoretical understanding of the virtues’ rationalities in an affectionate identification of myself to these rationalities, and that “produces a fusion of our natural powers to the modes and to the rationalities of the commandments”, or “it transforms our natural powers in the know rationalities of the virtues.” (Stăniloae 1992: 159)	Gifts
159	“From the gift of the <i>understanding</i> we progress to the last gift, which is the <i>gift of the wisdom</i> . This gift “it elevates us to the Cause of the spiritual rationalities from within commandments and to be united with the Cause. By this, by knowing – as much as it is possible to the people –, on an unknown way, the simple rationalities of the things being in	Gifts

	<p>God, we pull out as from a gushing spring of our heart the truth from all things sharing it in diverse modes to the other people too". In other words, this gift makes us partakers to the simple and exact contemplation of the truth from within all things. "Starting from here we will unveil the many and various rationalities of the truth out of the wise contemplation of the sensitive things and of the intelligible beings" (Saint Maximos the Confessor, <i>Quaest. Ad Thalassia</i>, q. 54). In everything we do or understand, we have now an ensemble vision, a vision upon the connection between the deeds or of the things, with the universal order." (Stăniloae 1992: 159)</p>	
159-160	<p>"When we have been given the wisdom, we have achieved all the virtues, namely we have achieved the state of dispassion. This state is the plain gushing up of the solar light, after it has been anticipated by increasingly intense rays. With this gushing up it starts the illumination itself. In all the individual virtues which preceded the state of dispassion, it has been shown a ray of the wisdom, in each ray being shown to us a part of the wisdom. Each ray has been a gift out of the enlightening gifts of the Holy Ghost. Now the wisdom appears to be whole, in the same time concentrated and simple. The wisdom is always united with the plenitude of the enlightening gifts of the Ghost. The wise man sees at once, in a wide and comprising mode, the truths from within all things, namely he all of them being in an interdependency, each of them having its own purpose and, in the same time,</p>	Gifts

	depending on their ultimate cause: God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 159-160)	
160	“The wisdom is the gift of seeing God simultaneous to all things or through all things, as the effective: Maker, Upholder, and Leader – of all things. The wisdom helps us to see on a glance the whole our past life, its purpose, the line we must walk on, the solidary meaning of all the deeds and of all the events from the human life, of the things from nature, for all of them are explained by the Unique Power and Cause staying at the basis of all things and showing His work at once in all things.” (Stăniloae 1992: 160)	Gifts
160	“On the basis of the simultaneous looking and understanding given us by wisdom, we then can detach the meaning of each thing and the norm of each deed we must do. If at the beginning, we have been gradually elevated from the partially known to the universally known, now, from the peak of the general picture we lower our eyes now on a detail and then on another detail from the total landscape, immediately ascertaining the place, immediately understanding the purpose, and immediately establishing its norm in the landscape.” (Stăniloae 1992: 160)	Gifts
160-161	“On a place Saint Maximos the Confessor discerned between <i>discernment</i> and <i>knowledge</i> . The first one is born out of the virtuous activity, while the second one is born out of faith; the first one is of a practical order, while the second one is of contemplative order. Through the first one we discern the	Gifts

	<p>good from the bad, while through the second one we know the rationalities of the seen and of the unseen realities, s having their foundation in God. We could identify the first one to the gifts of: advice, science, knowledge, and understanding, while the second one to the gifts of wisdom, for in other places Saint Maximos the Confessor didn't consider the faith as developing in knowledge, on a different line than that one of the virtues. But we could reckon that the practical discernment and the contemplative knowledge are two converging peaks which, ending in love, they give birth on a superior level to the mysterious knowledge about God, differing from wisdom, or from knowing God out of the world's things." (Stăniloae 1992: 160-161)</p>	
161	<p>"The gifts from the Holy Ghost guide us and uphold us in knowing God in a mediated manner. Differing from this it is the direct knowing of God, which will constitute the third step of the spiritual ascent or the phase of the union of the soul with God or of the union of the soul with God, or of seeing the godlike light. In the second phase, namely that of the illumination, we occupy ourselves with knowing God through the mediation of the nature and of the human deeds, individual and collective. This is a knowledge that follows immediately after the stage of the dispassion, which is a cleaning up of passions, but still not a cleaning up of the simple images Oof the things. After the mind will be cleaned up not only of passions, but also of the images and of the</p>	Knowledge

	simple representations of the things, we will be given the direct knowledge of God, the theological knowledge from the phase three.” (Stăniloae 1992: 161)	
161	“For the unmediated knowing of God still is a knowledge through the Holy Ghost, namely through the gifts from the Holy Ghost, even from the second phase of knowledge the man “knows into Ghost”. But it is “knowledge through the Holy Ghost even from this phase, for it takes place after the man through his virtues, and through the gifts from the Holy Ghost, he has unlocked the or he has actualized the ghost from within himself, as the central and intimate place of the mind, and he has opened this eye destined to seeing God. The illuminating gifts of the Ghost become obvious to the man only through this opening of this eye of his, of this pantry destined to be filled up with godlike life. The Holy Ghost makes Himself known to us only as activating our ghost.” (Stăniloae 1992: 161)	Knowledge
162	“Knowing through the Holy Ghost it means knowing through the mind returned back into its ghost, from the scattering at surface. The “knowing into ghost” it is knowledge from this intimate interior of the man, from the place of the godlike light which fills this ghost up. Through this light all the things become transparent to the one who known “into ghost”, for to his sight, the surface of the things and of the human deeds is no longer an opaque wall, but it is a transparent which one can see the meanings and their connection with God through.	Knowledge

	He no longer stops himself, through passions, on the surface: he has crossed beyond his surface and beyond the thickened surface of the things.” (Stăniloae 1992: 162)	
162-163	<p>“It is a great mystery this seeing in the depths of the things and of the human destinies. These depths cannot be opened exclusively through the sensorial noticing of the things, because if that had been the case, anybody would have been capable of noticing them as one notices the thing’s sensitive structure, through the generalizing rationality, or the bunches of common features of the individuals of the same species, through the so-called “notions” or “essences” which are immanent to the things. But if the depths become transparent only to the one who have been elevated from his thickened shell to “his ghost”, it will mean that this ghost has a power of penetrating the things’ depths, either for the light from the ghost penetrates into the things’ depths or for it makes the light hidden within things to become transparent. Only on the measure which somebody has become to himself on, the things also become transparent to him. This is for the same power working within him it will then stretch outwards. The Holy Fathers use the following comparison: as in order our eyes to see the physical light and the things from within it, likewise, in order the eyes of our soul to see the light of the intelligible and divine realities, namely the thing’s depths, these eyes of our soul must be previously filled up with the light irradiating from these realities. Within the one who</p>	Knowledge

	<p>sees there must be something out of what he sees. That's why Saint Maximos the Confessor called the depths of the Holy Scripture as "its ghost", like the depths from within man he called it as "the ghost of the man". That one notices the ghost of the Holy Scripture who looks at the Holy Scripture through his ghost. In other terms, the depths form within man and the depths of the things are illuminated by a common light, or, out of them it irradiates a common light. A common light unites the human subject with the things or with his fellow humans. Who has received this light within himself, he has penetrated in the area of the depths differing from him. His self and those depths form through that light a dual unit, like in a more reduced measure they form such a unity in the world's visible area too, through the physical light engulfing it, or that crosses through it, with the seeing power of the bodily senses." (Stăniloae 1992: 162-163)</p>	
163	<p>"The separation between subject and object it is overcome on the plan of the mysterious knowledge in ghost, without these two to be confounded. The subject and the object are different to one another, but they aren't separated. It is overcome the separation between subject and object and though both of them are saved, for the subject experiences in his depths an "object" differing from him. But the "object" experienced within subject, by being a spiritual reality or by being connected inwardly to the subject, it is in continuity or in a inter-communication with the knowing subject and, both of</p>	Knowledge

	<p>them, with the supreme Subject staying at the basis of all things. Of course, that spiritual reality isn't a uniform one, but it is various, it is a world full of rationalities, out of which it is incorporated the structure characteristic to each thing in its seen countenance, the structure characteristic to each person, or to each individual action. But it is not less true that they too are intertwined in an ensemble, or that they are merged in the same understood and understanding light. And when that light has filled our inside up, it doesn't appear to us as limited by the margins of our being, but as extended over all the things which we united ourselves with, through cleanness and love.</p> <p>Through this light the singular things and the nature in its totality, they become a transparent which their higher rationalities and their connections to God become transparent through. Through thing is seen, somehow, God Himself." (Stăniloae 1992: 163)</p>	
2. Contemplating God into Creation		
164	<p>"Like the Law is a pedagogue towards Christ, likewise the man, as long he is child in his understanding, he is being guided by the mirrors and by the riddles of the created world towards knowing God. The rationalities from within the created world take the place of the sights and they make possible a partial understanding of the wisdom of God." (Stăniloae 1992: 164)</p>	Knowledge
164	<p>"No matter how much Saint Maximos the Confessor</p>	World

	accentuated that the creation has only a passing importance to God, he some other times grants the creation a impassable importance, for its rationalities would persist also after the plain unveiling of God in the future life.” (Stăniloae 1992: 164)	
164	“We could compare the world to a chamber full of all kinds of things, and the godlike glory to the sunlight. The darker is the chamber, the less are seen the things from within it. And the more light flows through windows the more the things from within the chamber could be seen clearer and more beautiful.” (Stăniloae 1992: 164)	World
165	“The rationalities of the things from the world, far from becoming useless after the uncovered seeing of God, they will help us understanding the fecundity of the divine Rationality, and they will even be an exemplification of the divine Rationality, like the sunrays are and exemplification and an manifestation of its light. Of course, then we will look directly at the Sun or the righteousness, or to His light, and only indirectly at the things’ rationalities, while now cannot see the direct gushing up of the sunlight but only its faded irradiation out of things. In other words, when we will contemplate God directly, we will contemplate the things’ rationalities directly in Him, and not in things, as we do now, so that these rationalities will be more illuminated, deeper, and more explained.” (Stăniloae 1992: 165)	World
166	“It is a main idea had by Saint Maximos the Confessor that the things hide within them the divine rationalities, as equally	World

	<p>many rays of the Logos or of the supreme Rationality. The one who discovers these rationalities within things he ascends on their thread to knowing God and this knowledge must anticipate knowing God directly.</p> <p>This teaching attributes to Creation and to the cogitation referring to Creation, a necessary role in the man's ascension towards God. Saint Maximos is stranger to the theory of sight which we could reach at by avoiding the cosmos's forms and laws. On the road of our getting closer to God it stays the world, which we must cross through the understanding of it. Each man has a mission relating to the world. Each man must know the world according to the power given him, and, because the knowledge cannot come except after achieving the virtues, each man must develop, previously, a moral activity relating to the world. A principled negative attitude towards the world it hinders our salvation itself. The world is imposed to each human being as a stone which he to sharpen his spiritual faculties on.” (Stăniloae 1992: 166)</p>	
166	<p>“Through the world the man grows up to the height of knowing God and to the height of being a partner to God. The world is a pedagogue towards Christ. Of course, the world can be a road to hell too. The world is the tree of knowing the good and the bad, the trial tree. If we contemplate the world's beauty in order to praise its Maker, we will be granted the salvation; but if we think that this tree's fruit is purely</p>	World

	<p>something to eat, we will lose ourselves. The salvation cannot be obtained in isolation but in the cosmic frame. This value of the world as road towards God it can be explained not only by the fact that the man must have an object of huge amplitude with the help of which he to strengthen his spiritual forces, but also out of the intrinsic structure of the world, as symbol of the divine transcendent reality. The symbol (in Greek language: to put together, to unite two things without confounding them) it is a seen reality that not only represents but also makes somehow to be seen through itself an unseen reality. The symbol supposes and shows, somehow simultaneously, two things. The symbol id “the bridge between two worlds”, as somebody said. The word, for instance, it is the symbol of the spirit, by uniting without confounding and by simultaneously presenting the materiality of a sound with the meanings of a cogitation; the human face does alike, by making transparent the spirit from within man, through the face’s materiality, and, in the case that the man lives in God, it will show God Himself.” (Stăniloae 1992: 166)</p>	
167	<p>“The question is: discerning the divine rationalities out of nature and their connection with the divine Rationality, is it done on the discursive way of forming notions and deductions from the seen things towards their ultimate cause, or is it accomplished through a quicker intuition? The scholastic Thomism doesn’t admit another way of knowing the</p>	Theology

	rationalities from the things and of knowing God, except the discursive-deductive one, as the only possible way of knowledge.” (Stăniloae 1992: 167)	
167-168	“The Holy Fathers sustained, as the newer Orthodox theologians do too, that the penetration in the spiritual depths from beyond the natural world, it cannot be done on a rational way. To the world’s structure as symbol it relates to a symbolic knowledge, differing from the rational one. The rationality’s categories define, namely they set boundaries, and they discern something from something else. That’s why they are applicable only to the limited realities which differ from one another. By being infinite, inexhaustible, the godhead cannot be object to the rational determinations. The rationality fits only the natural world and not the spiritual world too.” (Stăniloae 1992: 167-168)	World
168	“This glimmer isn’t an objective given to anybody, but one discovers it only in a spiritual feeling, only by seeing it “in ghost”, as Saint Maximos the Confessor would have said. But for this sight “in ghost” of the world’s rationalities, a sight differing from knowing them deductively, or rationally, one needs a previous purification of his being, through long asceticism.” (Stăniloae 1992: 168)	Knowledge
168	“Saint Maximos the Confessor sustained that out of the things’ rationalities “we know that God is the Maker of the seen things, but how God is we cannot understand” (<i>Quaest. Ad Thalass.</i> , q. 51). From here and also out of the role	World

	<p>attributed by Saint Maximos to the “rationality” in knowing these aspects of the things, which he also persistently called “rationalities”, it would turn out that this contemplation has a rational character. Then, ceaselessly, Saint Maximos asked the man who strives for consummation, to purify and to restore all his soul’s faculties, including his rationality. That’s why we said that the soul’s getting closer to God it cannot be done through a jump outside the rationality, but after a long exercising of the rationality in knowing the things’ meanings. That’s why the world has been appointed as our road towards God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 168)</p>	
169	<p>“The world’s existence if proven as having, in addition to other meanings, also that one of exercising all our soul’s powers in our ascension towards God. If God had wanted to make Himself known at once, or directly, the things’ world would have been lacking one of its meaning. The existence of the world itself as road towards God it is a proof that the supreme knowledge about God it isn’t and irrational act, but it is a supra-rational act, namely it isn’t done by prematurely renouncing to rationality, namely through a direct jump outside rationality, but it is done by surpassing the rationality on a level that doesn’t abolish the rationality, but it implies the rationality, after activating and using all the rationality’s resources, and after a fuller exercising of the rationality’s powers. We will be elevated to a supra-rational knowledge about God, but not to an anti-rational knowledge, after</p>	Knowledge

	<p>through our rationality itself, exercised at maximum, we understand that the domain which we have penetrated in, it exceeds the limited rational powers of ours, by a plus of light, and not by a minus of light. On the peak of the knowledge about God we know too much, we notice too many meanings and in a too luminous form, and not too little, related to the rationality's pretences. This is the fact stopping us from claiming that this abundance has its source only within our rationality. It has its source also in a supra-rationality from above its own powers, but which doesn't annul our rationality. But, in order to reach this too-much intelligibility, we must have reached to know the upper powers of our understanding power." (Stăniloae 1992: 169)</p>	
169	<p>"According to the Holy Fathers, in order to discover the rationalities from things, it is needed a long purification of passions and a prolonged exercise, and this fact shows us that neither the "rationality" in its common meaning, it is that one that notices the "rationalities" of the things and God through these ones, but it is about a rationality exercised also by choosing the rational deeds required by the godlike commandments and through the gradual "rationalization" of the man, which is achieved through virtues. But this gradual exercising of the rationality through knowing and doing, it has at its basis the act of intuitively knowing, which the long exercised rationality is involved in." (Stăniloae 1992: 169)</p>	Knowledge
170	<p>"In the first place, there is a truth or an objective meaning</p>	Truth

	<p>regarding everything. This is what the term “rationality” (λογος) – used by Saint Maximos the Confessor, and by other Church Fathers - wants to say. The truth or the meaning it isn’t a subjective product, really varying from a individual to another individual. Each thing has, objectively, an own meaning, as also a purpose, a cause, a finality, and a special connection with the other things. Our judgment on this truth or meaning it can vary according to our interests, according to preconceived ideas, and according to our intellectual capacity and education. But this doesn’t modify the truth too, or the meaning of a thing, which remains untouched in itself, waiting for being discovered. Likewise, any deed must have “rationality” and only then it is objectively rational when it conforms to that rationality. If, due to diverse interests, we do not fit the deed to the rationality which our deed is called to serve to, we will vainly try to endow our deed with other “rationality” – our deed will remain irrational.” (Stăniloae 1992: 170)</p>	
170	<p>“Everything God has done it takes place and it is committed according to His will - namely on the line of the true development of the Creation, in totality, or of each creature individually - it is rational, said Saint Maximos the Confessor. Only the passion is irrational, though it tries to give to itself a rational justification. The rational character of this truth or meaning, it stays not only in the unchanged objectivity, harmonically interwoven within the whole reality, but also in</p>	Truth

	<p>the power which it imposes itself with, once it has reached the purification of passions. Then God glimmers out of each thing, in the doorstep of each deed, from the first moment. In this sense the discursive cogitation becomes no longer necessary in order to detach that truth and to impose it. It is in a way its intuitive glimmer. But this truth glimmers like overwhelming rationality, as logos objectively understood by us, but also above our understanding, imposing itself through its fully convincing and obvious rationality and, in the same time, through its supra-rationality as a reflection of a harmonious and immovable of existence order, of a thing or of deeds within the entire reality.” (Stăniloae 1992: 170)</p>	
171	<p>“The reason why a long period of preparation with a pronounced moral character it is needed, in order to reach to contemplating at once the rationalities from things and form deeds, it is because our rationality doesn’t remain, in any conditions which we live in, invariably having the same capacity of objectively noticing the truth. According to the usual expression of the Holy Fathers, our rationality it “weakens”, it doesn’t firmly keep its sovereign position as objective judge. What attracts our rationality off the throne it is the passions. The passions make our rationality to invent rational arguments for justifying any sinful deed. And because of the sinful facts abusing of things, by reckoning the things only as objects of material satisfaction, and by this the rationality justified as rational an irrational behavior, the</p>	Rationality

	<p>rationality find to the things too, rationalities which aren't actually theirs, but they are in fact rationalities presenting the things in an altered light, namely false rationalities.” (Stăniloae 1992: 171)</p>	
171	<p>“In front of a rationality that has fallen to the role of servant to the passions, the world’s vision suffers the following modifications:</p> <p>1) The deeper, or the more “spiritual” rationalities of the things are being covered up, being seen only the materialistic and of bodily utility side of them. For instance, the beauty of an apple, the sweetness of a grape, they are no longer seen as having the purpose of making us to know that in God there are energies creating beauty and sweetness, knowledge which we should remain even there are no longer apples or grapes, but the only remaining is the idea that they simply stir up and satisfy a bodily appetite. On the beauty of the young women they say that it is a tempting form produced by nature in order to serve the species multiplication. The material features of the things make a wall that impedes any sight beyond them. The world becomes exclusively material and useful, or usable exclusively bodily. The tree of knowing the good and the bad it simply becomes pleasant “to sight” and “tasty” to eat. Therefore, the horizon gets narrowed.</p> <p>2) The rationality of the passionate or of the interested, it strives to justify with arguments belonging to the general interest, the deeds committed out of personal interest. And</p>	Rationality

	<p>what is remarkable to the slippery character of the rationality it is that the rationality actually reaches to convince itself of the “truth” of this argumentation. This means replacing some objective rationalities for some subjective rationalities. Of course, these subjective “rationalities” aren’t actually rationalities; they are passionate “rationalities”, while the true rationalities are objective and I discover them when I experience that my judgments obey the rationalities from within things and not vice versa – the last case being a new crookedness, a new falling off the truth.” (Stăniloae 1992: 171)</p>	
171-172	<p>“Only the objective rationalities are those serving the general development, and are those which the things tend towards in their harmonious development. The one replacing the objective rationalities for subjective rationalities he put the general in the service of the individual, and thus he impedes the normal development of the whole. The objective and general truth is replaced for a truth belonging to an individual. Thus, because of each individual placing a “truth” of himself instead of the objective and general truth, the world no longer appears as the same to everybody, but each individual sees the world differently, so that no one knows anymore which world is the real one. This gives birth to the doubt that actually there is no longer a truth and that everything is an illusion. Actually, all the opinions give on this way as truth, they are only illusions. The objective truth still</p>	Truth

	exists, but it is beyond the interested judgment of everybody.” (Stăniloae 1992: 171-172)	
172	<p>“The German theologian Karl Heim reckons that the world fatally must appear to each individual and on each moment differently and differently, according to the perspective’s center (perspektivische Mitte) which one looks at the world from. But this perspective center most often is a center of the interests, a center of the passions. It is possible there to be innocent motives, which make possible the variety of the perspectives which the world is being looked at from: the little experience, the focusing of the look on a world’s domain, or the previous culture. But either these innocent motives too, are mixed with individualistic-passionate elements (for instance the acquired culture can be influenced by a unilateral passionate point of view), or that through the cleaning of the passions, which is achieved through experience, these innocent motives are at their turn surpassed too, the fact is that, in the end, these perspectives too, which appear as totally innocent, they can be surpassed at least partially. Anyway, there is a unique truth that is beyond the subjective perspectives and truths. We cannot come closer to that truth except gradually, and we might never have it wholly during this life. But neither in the future life. Only God know the whole truth. This is for God Himself is the whole Truth. Even the angels are being ceaselessly purified of nescience, said Dionysus the Areopagite. And the</p>	Theology

	<p>general idea of the Saint Fathers is that each person is given the gifts, and therefore also the gifts of the knowledge (namely of the truth), according to his powers. But amongst the ones who have achieved this partial knowledge of the truth – namely knowing the truth from an individual perspective, determined by non-passionate motives (the partial knowledge) – and the ones who intentionally alter the truth, there is a huge difference. The first ones are on the way of the truth, they are pilgrims towards heavens, while the last ones are turned with their back to the truth, and they are travelers towards hell, namely towards the father of the lie.” (Stăniloae 1992: 172)</p>	
172	<p>“The appearance of truth of the subjective opinions it is explained by the fact that they are the refractions of the unique truth, in the crooked by passions receptacles, which are the diverse individuals.” (Stăniloae 1992: 172)</p>	Truth
173	<p>“According to the Eastern Fathers the truth isn’t subjectivity, as said Sören Kirkegaard, but it is the most objective reality. In order to find the truth one must, a contrary, to overcome any subjectivity. Of course, one cannot find out the truth on a purely theoretical way, through rationality detached from the integral living of a concrete person. Such a detaching it is impossible. Rationality in itself, uniform to all people, it is impossible too. The passions made the rationality slippery. And on the removal of the passions, the rationality advanced differently, depending on each person, in knowing the</p>	Truth

	<p>objective truth. From this point of view, the knowledge depends too on a “subjective” state of the rationality. But the truest subjectivity it is that according to the truth’s “objectivity”. Within the man who hasn’t purified himself of passions yet, the rationality is always in the service of the passions and its reasoning crook up the truth. This sinful “subjectivity” is the one that must be overcome. But one doesn’t overcome the “subjective” rationality only by not listening to it in the moments of cogitation. The man cannot live split in half. Even if for a while, a part of him, namely his affectivity and his complex of interests seem to be asleep, these ones still influence the rationality’s reasoning. The man must be unified. This subjectivity falsifying the truth, it cannot be defeated except through a battle which all the man’s powers are engaged in, and not only the rationality, in order to obtain the total victory upon the passionate subjectivity. One must replace the passions for virtues.” (Stăniloae 1992: 173)</p>	
173-174	<p>“Only a rationality shaped according to a virtuous life, namely after a life that has sacrificed, through a long exercise, the egotism and the pride of the own point of view, it can come close to the truth. This can be called as subjectivity too, but only in a precise sense: as struggle of the whole man against his egotistic subjectivity, as struggle in order to reach the forgetting about the self and to experience this forgetting about the self. Only the subjectivity which means the living of</p>	Truth

the overcoming of the own subjectivity, it is able to come close to the truth. That's why it is just what Kirkegaard says that the truth is the evidence which you are ready to yield your life for; but this sacrifice capacity means forgetting about the self. Who has come close to the truth he has succeeded that for through a long exercise he has succeeded to forget about himself, to get out of himself, and once he has found the truth, the truth makes him forgetting about himself ever more. But this state is an integral feeling. Here isn't only the rationality that has forgotten about the side of the subjectivity, but here is the whole man forgetting about himself. And this doesn't mean only something negative, but it means something positive too: the whole man is in love with the truth, he is stretching towards the truth, he is happy for defeating on himself, and he is happy to live and to die for the truth. In this sense we can speak too about a finding out and about an existential living of the truth. But the rationality isn't removed from its function, while still isn't a cold rationality, but a rationality assisted by all the soul's powers. The rationality feels free for it has the evidence that it serves the truth, which is really conform to it, and not to a appearance of truth, stranger to it, and non-conform to it. The truth keeps the rationality conquered – as on the whole man too – and the truth has set the rationality itself free, and the whole man is on a superior level, identified to the truth, and transformed, namely elevated on a superior level of his being.”

	(Stăniloae 1992: 173-174)	
174	<p>“This getting out of the self in objectivity in order to find out the truth and in order to live the truth as something conform to the most characteristic subjectivity, or better said this integral identification of the self to the objective logos, It means, in the same time, the getting out of isolation and entering the universal, in the relation with the Person Who comprises everything. As we know more fully the truth, we leave our private opinions which are contrary, and we start thinking the same. We reach the union in thought, and this has as consequence the union in will and feeling too. This is the restoration of the human being which has been torn apart by sin. This is accomplished through the one truth, Who is the supreme Person, Whom the restoration of the human being is conform to, for the truth is God and we are made conform to God. Where God is known, Who is everything as Person, there it is accomplished the communion, namely the Church. The truth cannot be known and confessed except “with one mind and with one heart”.” (Stăniloae 1992: 174)</p>	Truth
175-181	<p>“The stage of the coming back to the road of the truth and to its increasingly clearer light, are the followings:</p> <p>1) An initial faith, as will of explaining all the things through their rationalities, rationalities which have they roots in God as Person, or as a supreme communion of Persons and of fulfilling on any moment the commandment given by God, even if we do not have yet an experienced satisfactory</p>	Truth

evidence of the connection of the things' rationalities with God or of the motives which we must fulfill His commandments for. This is for now a global faith about the presence of God as Person in everything, and Who make us only generally to realize that we are into truth and that we go on that road towards increasingly understanding Him.

2) A long perseverance in guiding the life and in explaining the things from within world in the light of the faith. These two are in tight connection. This is for guiding the life according to the Lord's commandments on the basis of the faith it means purifying of passions and regaining the virtues, namely the getting out of our narrowness and the conformation of our being to God, through relation with Him. This isn't else but renouncing to considering the things as simple objects for egotistical satisfaction, and regarding the things as rays of the divine glory, love, and almightiness. During the whole this time I do on the basis of the faith some value judgment upon the deeds which I must commit and explanative judgments upon the true rationalities or purposes of the things, related to God. Persevering through deeds in such an effort it accustoms me to these judgments. For instance, I am getting accustomed no longer considering an apple, when I see it, as an attractive material substance for my lust, but rather as a sign of the divine kindness and beauty, and I find out the rationality of any deed in a commandments of God, Who wants me to answer His love

and to conforming myself in my deeds to Him, as any deed that doesn't conform to this commandments I regard it as irrational.

3) The life experience achieved through the mentioned perseverance it will confirm me my value judgments after I have accustomed myself to do these judgments upon the deeds, and it confirm me also the explanation of the things' rationalities as having their foundation in God. The experiences shows me that actually the things' surface beauty and sweetness it is perishable, that a live directed only towards bodily and egotistical satisfactions searched in these superficial beauties and sweetness, it loses through the body's withering its support which we have placed the whole our trust in. So, what actually remains out of the beautiful objects it is the revelation of a beauty that is independent from its material incorporations, as the man after the weakening of his body he remains with a being that has reached the cleanness. Thus, the judgments upheld in the beginning by faith, crossing through the experience of a virtuous life, they start being illuminated by interior evidence. Until the faith isn't prolonged in fulfilling the commandments "it has in itself the rationality of the truth" (Saint Maximos the Confessor, *Qauest. ad Thalas.*, q. 54), but yet not illuminated, yet not made obvious.

In order to reach the evidence of the truth implied in faith, or the evidence of the judgments we made on the faith's basis,

we must exercise a lot in the virtuous life. This clean evidence is that called as *discernment*. The fact that the discernment stays, on one hand, in connection with the understanding of the rationalities from within things, appearing in the same time and developing in a parallel manner, but on the other hand it gives birth to this knowledge of the rationalities and not inversely, it might justify Saint Maximos the Confessor to place the discernment here on a parallel level, and there on a level previous to knowing the rationalities from within things. But we realize that the discernment is founded on wider evidence than that one that we can comprise in our judgment or in our concept. This is for we realize that the rationality itself of a commandment or the rationality of a thing, it cannot be integrally and exactly caught in a judgment of ours, and even lesser the rationality or the meaning of a person. Thus, we always tend towards concepts more adequate to that evidence, though immediately that we reach a more comprising concept, or a more nuanced judgment, the evidence has become even larger, more profound. Since the phase of the simple faith and of the judgment uttered on its basis, without explicit evidence, there existed at least the evidence that in things and in commandments there are godlike rationalities and utterances which we cannot perceive, so that the faith's indications are right. Since then, beside the judgments there has been evidence which those judgments haven't been able to comprise it. In this infinite virtuality it is

manifested the presence within world of the **divine intentional energies**. The rationalities from within things aren't else but the rationalities of God, projected in the things' mirror by the **divine intentional energies**. From the rationalities imperfectly mirrored in things are open to us new perspectives of ascending on the thread of the divine energies to the rationalities from within God. But we won't ever be able to confine these in concepts. The evidence it cannot be therefore ever comprised within the concepts' and of the rational judgment' margins, on one hand because it isn't yet enough clear, and on the other hand because it is virtually infinite and we feel on every moment its borderless character. The discernment as noticing of the rationalities from within commandments and from within the deeds we must to commit, it becomes increasingly clearer, and the knowledge directed towards things it penetrates towards their increasingly spiritual rationalities. Deeds which are apparently good, through discernment - or through the right reckoning as it is called by monks - are unveiled as lacking this quality. Rationalities which seemed before a ultimate, they indicate towards new progresses to be made in the virtuous life, towards even deeper rationalities. Through exercise, it is being continuously sharpened the power of noticing the things' meanings, the intentions God has through things, and the consequences of our deeds upon us and upon our fellow humans.

4) But this increased nimbleness it has as effect also an acceleration of noticing the rationalities from deeds and from things, insomuch than, after a long exercise, it is unveiled from the first glance what is bad even in an apparently good deed, or in the deeper rationality of a thing. Through the long habituation of discerning the real good deeds from the deeds which are only apparently good, immediately that one asks for our advice for a certain deed, or immediately that a thought urges me to commit that deed, I notice the deed's quality. And by the long habituation to considering that the things' rationalities do not consist of their simply bodily use, but it consists of revealing a spiritual meaning, of a divine intention, immediately that I see a new thing, I notice beyond that thing, beyond its bodily useful surface, its spiritual meaning, the divine feature which that things indicate towards, the divine will and relation wanted to be accomplished through that thing with me, my spiritual enrichment or my impoverishment intended through that thing.

This is the lightening "intuition" of the things' essences and of the deeds' values. As one can see it doesn't appear out of the blue sky and it isn't something irrational, but it is the result of a long exercising of the rationality guided by faith and upheld by persevering into the virtuous life. If we reserve the name of *contemplation* used by Saint Maximos the Confessor, on the basis of this nimble sight and of this rapid noticing, let's not forget though that it appears at the end of

the long effort of purification of passions, of achieving the virtues, when we truly will be able to look the things as “simple ideas” and in the same time deep, namely in the spiritual rationalities unaffected by our passion. We “see” God through these rationalities also in the sense that the long habituation to bringing everything in connection with God it helps us not to do this operation in a flashing manner, by seeing from the first perceiving of a quality divine features which have accomplished that, the purpose which we have been given with it, as sign of His love in order to incite our love, in order to be accomplished between us, God, and our fellow humans, a dialogue of the reciprocal self-giving out of love. But as I said before, in this rapid noticing too, there is larger evidence than the one we can comprise in concept. As lightening we bring a thing’s beauty in connection with God on the basis of habituation, as lightening we realize that the divine beauty is more than the thing’s beauty. Immediately, the mystery of something overwhelming it glimmers.

This evidence is always wider and more different, always exceeding the concept’s margins, it is what that that is mysterious in what it is seen, namely what cannot be expressed, what it is fitted as contemplative element to the rational element. But this element characteristic to the contemplation it doesn’t appear, it isn’t being developed except on the occasion of the rational efforts, at its turn stimulating those efforts. The contemplative element always

appears as a plus over the rational meaning, and not like a minus. Being this plus present on all levels, we could say that all the time the reasoning is accompanied by contemplation. But it still is advisable to be reserved the name of *contemplation* to this stage of rapid noticing the rationalities from within things and of the plus corresponding to this level. This rapid noticing of the spiritual meaning of the things, and of the plus of meaning, it differs from the phenomenological intuition which doesn't know about such a preparation. Even the act of religiously knowing God, which Scheler speaks about, it wouldn't be capable, we reckon, of such intuitions which become steadfast, without the previous levels mentioned, namely without a long moral preparation. They can take place mostly on rare moments; while the contemplation which the Holy Fathers speak about, though striking like the lightening, it is like a permanent lightening. The spiritually grown up man relates all the things immediately and continuously to God, namely he contemplates God through everything. Of course, the spiritual man doesn't reject the discursive cogitation. But he does this operation often after he has contemplated in an instant and simultaneously the thing and its relation with God, or in the same time with the contemplation. This unfolding in its components and its rational demonstration of a direct lightening vision, it takes that one, at its turn, even further, as we have prepared it before too. The discursive reasoning

and the flashing contemplation do not exclude on each other, for the last one it has grown up out of the first one, or also out of the first one, being again a departure point to the reasoning. The contemplation is a reasoning of a species of reasoning, plus an element not included in them but occasioned by them, and the reasoning is a contemplation unfolded to a point in what the contemplation has a possible to define meanings.

The antique Eastern writings say about this rapid discernment that it is also a gift received from above and a capacity achieved in time, being characteristic to the advanced ones. That's why the monk must ask for their advice in everything. The fact that it is achieved gradually and it doesn't appear suddenly, out of the blue sky, it confirms what we have said concerning the gradual gaining of the capacity of "seeing" at once the things' rationalities, and the rationalities of the deeds to commit. But the fact that it is a gift too, it shows on one hand that the effort for gradually gaining it, it is guided and upheld by a grace of the holy Ghost, which helps to be a certain disposition developed within man; and on the other hand, in addition to upholding this effort that develops the man's power of understanding, the grace opens a plus of unveiling, of evidence, which doesn't exclude a previous rational development. The contemplation isn't a flashing of evidence coming to someone unprepared, but, as Saint Maximos the Confessor said, it comes

consequently to a long searching for. But then it isn't only what comes out of this searching for, but it is also gift or self-opening of the Holy Ghost, after He was also the One urging us to undertake this searching.

5) The capacity of discerning rapidly and more nuanced the rationalities of the things and of the human individual deeds, it means, in the same time, the capacity of noticing the ties of a thing's rationality, or of a deed, with the rationalities of other things, or with the rationalities of other deeds.

Through habituation, this capacity gains the power of seeing each thing's meaning in connection with the world's ensemble, as also the capacity of seeing each deed in connection with the whole life of the respective man, or with the other people's lives. He sees now unitarily the truth or the meaning which animates and tied all things, as irradiation out of each thing, out of each virtuous deed. This is the wisdom. This makes impossible the unilateral judgments or the need for later retractions, for on each time the wise man, on the basis of the integral vision of the truth in everything he gives a balanced judgment, namely a judgment that keep all things in balance, not leaning towards a side or another.

That's why, after somebody has been elevated through the habituation of the exact, nuanced, and rapid discernment regarding the individual things and deeds, to wisdom, namely to the capacity of looking at the unique truth in the world's ensemble, each time he will have to emit a judgment upon the

individual things and deeds, he will start from this ensemble vision, by taking in account the unitary truth seen in everything.

As in case of noticing the individual rationalities in front of the mind there has glimmered a plus of evidence that exceeds by a lot the borders of any concept and of any reasoning, for being the image of the divine Logos mirrored within world. The more we deepen ourselves in cogitating on this image, the more we progress on the line of the divine energies towards the heavenly model and the more we realize His infinity. But this progress means in the same time increasing in the understanding caught in ever nuanced concepts, increasingly comprising concepts.

The divine Logos is to us the virtual bosom of all the concepts and meanings. But He remains always much more and otherwise than one can comprise in concepts. The fact that no concept can comprise the Logos in an adequate manner – fact for which the Holy Fathers reckon the identification of God to the concept about Him as being worshipping of an idol, because of the idol means elevating something created to the level of the absolute – it cannot stop us, until we still do not claim of aiming the godlike Being Himself, from catching again in concepts, some things regarding His rationalities or the role of definitions which we are aware of the possibility of being always surpassed. Otherwise, one no longer would be able to say anything about God and the religious life of the

	<p>many couldn't be upheld and it couldn't progress. Beside that, the Holy Fathers assertively affirm the development of the faith in Gnosis, namely in a certain understanding, through the mediation of the virtues. By considering as justified the apophatic theology referring to the divine Being, we reckon in an exaggerated manner that from here to be deduced a removal, in any conditions, of the concepts. Even N. Lossky, who accentuates the apophatism so much, he admits to a degree the necessity of the concepts." (Stăniloae 1992: 175-181)</p>	
181-182	<p>"The rationality which we contemplate within the world's things are, according to the Holy Fathers, the God's ideas. Better said, the things send our mind towards the ideas from within God, which the things are created according to. These are the rationalities of the divine Logos, and as they form in Him a unitary ensemble, likewise the things are such an ensemble. The wisdom, by noticing the unitary truth from within all things, it notices the ensemble of the divine ideas of the Logos." (Stăniloae 1992: 181-182)</p>	Knowledge
183	<p>"In order the man to know the Logos out of nature and out of Scripture, and this will be necessary to him if he wants to reach the consummation, he must understand both of them in "ghost", by crossing beyond their material shell." (Stăniloae 1992: 183)</p>	Knowledge
3. Spiritually Understanding the Scripture		

183	“According to the explanation given by Saint Maximos the Confessor to the Lord’s Transfiguration, the shiny face of Jesus means the law of the grace, which is no longer hidden by the veil, and the white and changed vestments mean in the same time the Scripture’s letter and the nature, both of them becoming transparent in the light of the spiritual and by grace understanding. From the human face of the Logos it is spread the light upon the old law and upon nature.” (Stăniloae 1992: 183)	Understanding
183-184	“The spiritual understanding of the Scripture it is a steadfast tradition of the Eastern spiritual writing; Saint Maximos the Confessor had always the harshest words for the ones who cannot elevate themselves above literally understanding the Scripture. Over those ones, as also upon the Jews understanding the Scripture bodily, it masters the hell, namely the nescience.” (Stăniloae 1992: 183-184)	Understanding
184	“Spiritually understanding the Scripture, or getting into connection through the Scripture’s words with the “words”, with the living meanings and with the intentional energies of God, it needs a preparation, as also for knowing the living rationalities or words and of the actual works of God through things. The ones who are full of passions, as they remain stuck to the seen surface of the things, likewise they remain stuck to the Scripture’s letter and to the Scripture’s history, both the nature and the letter of the Scripture being to them the wall closing their road towards God – instead of being	Understanding

	transparent to, or guiding them towards God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 184)	
184	<p>“The Scripture, as the nature too, they must be considered as a symbol - in the meaning shown before – as environment which is transparent to the infinite depths of the spiritual meanings communicated by God as Person. The one who doesn’t sink himself into these depths, the one who doesn’t have this capacity, and who limits himself to the surface letter, that one cuts off the connection of the Scripture with the deeps of God. If the Scripture comprises the divine cogitations and intentions addressed to us and if these cogitations and intentions are eternally valid, than the Scripture will have to have an infinite depths and a permanent validity, fitting any time and any person. Understanding the Scripture thus, it means getting out of the letter’s margin and of the temporal moment, which the godlike word was for the first time uttered on, and to understand that by referring to myself, to my generation, to my time, to my future, it means that while reading the Scripture’s letter I hear God Himself speaking to me and to us, today, or about me and us, and about our duties. Understanding the Scripture into “ghost” it means seeing the report from ever between God and us, and living this report in what concerns me, on the present moment, for I am living the present instance.” (Stăniloae 1992: 184)</p>	Understanding
184-185	“Both the Scripture’s words and the God’s deed from within	Understanding

	<p>Scripture, as supra-natural Revelation of God, they have a cleared meaning and a more direct character of claiming us than the meanings of the words of God incorporated in things and in the persons' relations with us. The whole life of Jesus, interpreted by His words, His deed of being Crucified and or Resurrecting Himself for us, they propose us more direct meanings, and more profound, and they ask us to live a life in His image, in order us to reach the resurrection and the union with God as He wants." (Stăniloae 1992: 184-185)</p>	
185	<p>"Understanding the Scripture's "ghost" won't be available except to the ones having within themselves the non-embodies and embodied Word's Ghost, namely the ones reading the Scripture through this Ghost. This doesn't mean that the subjective state of the ones who are reading the Scripture could loan the Scripture new meaning which are not objectively comprised by it. Such meanings wouldn't be any longer the objective meanings of word of God-the Word. This is for the preparation we have described, in a previous chapter, they have made their mind able to receive within it the power of the Ghost of Christ, in order to be able to notice the deeps and the claims from within Scripture. By becoming people living into Ghost, they perceive the Scripture's ghost (the Scripture's deep and permanent meanings), for the same Ghost Who worked in inspiring the Scripture and Who is hidden in the Scripture's text, He set their ghost in working, of the deeps corresponding in the inner man's life to the</p>	Understanding

	<p>deeps of God. Namely, by living according to the objective norms of the spiritual life and out of the objective source of the Ghost, they perceive these norms and this source in the Scripture's text. The light of the Ghost from within myself it is projected upon Scripture, penetrating thus the text's wall that covers up the light or the Ghost from within Scripture, or the light from within Scripture it is made known to the ones who have eyes for this light. That's why the light from within me isn't a subjective light, but it is still the objective light of the Holy Ghost, a light achieved by us through purification of passions and through the long exercise of cogitating at God, and of praying." (Stăniloae 1992: 185)</p>	
185	<p>"There are two things guarding this understanding in ghost of the Scripture against becoming subjective: a) The spiritual meanings of the Ghost, or the Ghost of Christ working within Scripture, they correspond to my soul's dispositions and aspirations (yet not to any of these ones but only to those which I have conformed myself with to the objective model Who is Christ, with the help of the grace of Christ), to the Saints, and by and large to the objective norms of the spiritual life from within Church. Then my dispositions are conform to the general model from within Church. I have been shaped according to the ones who have within them the Ghost, having the Same Ghost. b) The often reading of the patristic interpretations, as also the long cogitation at the Scripture's texts in the light of these interpretations, they will</p>	Understanding

	accustom me to unveil immediately the analogue meanings from any other text of the Scripture.” (Stăniloae 1992: 185)	
185-186	<p>“The virtuous life, according to the living role models from within Church, and firstly according to the role model of Christ, and the readings from the Holy Fathers sharpen acutely the discernment related to the Scripture’s texts, which becomes ever nuanced, ever deeper, and ever more rapid, as we have seen in the case of the discernment referring to the things from nature, to the human persons and their deeds. This preparation being a growing up in the love for Christ, it makes me feel increasingly more Himself Christ speaking through Scripture. In time, the spiritual man achieves a capacity of ensemble understanding the Scripture’s meanings, seeing all of them as irradiating out of the Same Christ, Who shows Himself in the interpretation of each text. This protects the reader against getting astray, by forced interpretations. This is for in the Scripture there is the unitary wisdom of Christ, communicated through the Holy Ghost, achieved by the spiritual man too. For our inner being too, as the nature too, likewise the Scripture, but in a clearer degree, more directly, it has deeps leading towards the divine infinite and they make felt the Person of the godlike Word. It lets open an infinite progress in deepening the Scripture and in feeling Christ ever more accentuated. Any concepts, which we would comprise the new meanings we have discovered in, and which we would express the presence of Christ with, they are always</p>	Knowledge

	<p>exceeded by the evidence of a wider content, or a more felt presence of Christ, though there cannot be any contradiction between what we have achieved, on a certain level of the understanding, and what remains ceaselessly to be deepened. The progress in the spiritual deepening of the Scripture it depends on our progress in that life according to the ghost, it depends on our purification of the passions' egotism and, consequently, it depends on the love for Christ which we have grown up to through virtues, a love developed by effort too, but also by the gifts of the Holy Ghost, gifts coming from Christ, namely by Christ's love coming to us." (Stăniloae 1992: 185-186)</p>	
186	<p>"If spiritually understanding the Scripture means also referring the Scripture to my own life and to the contemporary generation, than understanding the Scripture will actualize the Scripture, and each character from Scripture will become a type for our own soul, and each moment from Scripture will become a real or possible event of our own soul's life. All of those types are types for what takes place with the people permanently: King Hezekiah in his diverse phases of life, it is the human soul, and therefore it is my soul too in the diverse phases; David is the mind cleaned of passion, mastering upon the peaceful soul as upon a Jerusalem being the peace's stronghold; Saul is the soul having a bodily understanding of the law; the iron gate opening before Apostle Peter, in order him to be able to get out of prison, it is the callous heart of all</p>	Knowledge

	times, and therefore mine too; Babylon is the soul engulfed in the passions' confusion." (Stăniloae 1992: 186)	
187	<p>"All the things from Scripture become thus not only contemporary to us, but they are somehow a biography of our reports with God. In this sense, the savior deeds of the life of Jesus will become actual deeds taking place in the deep of my life, if I want to receive Him within me. At Baptism He hides Himself within me, in a supreme kenosis. He manifests His efficiency, covertly at the beginning, and then increasingly obvious, in my endeavor of fulfilling the commandments; He will resurrect within me when I reach the state of dispassion, He "will transfigure" Himself for me when I reach to see the godlike light. Penetrated within me, in a hidden manner, at Baptism, Christ is the efficient force guiding and empowering my whole ascension, during which I become increasingly transparent to Him, through my gradual deification, making me like Him through dialogic al communication with Him, he actively mirroring Himself in numerous human lives, as the sun in countless windows." (Stăniloae 1992: 187)</p>	Holy Mysteries : Baptism
187-188	<p>"This actualization of the Scripture and of the events from within it, this way of understanding the Scripture by any soul as referring to himself in the concrete circumstances which he is in, it gives the temporal moment an auxiliary role in understanding the Scripture, as also in understanding the nature. The Scripture is eternally the same but also eternally new to each moment of the creation unfolding. The problems</p>	Time

	<p>which our time poses to us, the preoccupations imposed to us by our time, the theme which our time brings to us, my soul's straining when facing them and under their pressure, without introducing into Scripture new meanings which aren't objectively in the Scripture, they unveil in continuity to the meanings unveiled so far, new meanings, formulated in new concepts, which are solidary to the former concepts. In this it is shown that the Holy Ghost doesn't avoid the time, but he crosses through time and he transfigures the time. Our spiritual contents will eternally preserve something of the color of the time which we live in." (Stăniloae 1992: 187)</p>	
188	<p>"The unveiling of the creation too, it can be understood increasingly more in the light of the spiritual understanding of the Scripture and, above all, of the Christian teaching. This unveiling isn't a monovalent one. In it are manifested in the same time the rationalities of the divine Providence and Judgment, whose knowledge is achieved on a higher level of the spiritual life. The Providence's rationalities are the luminous side of the creation's development in time, and those of the Judgment are the shadow side. This unveiling brings in the light, during its unfolding, positive aspirations and values which are the expression of the dynamic rationalities, of the force-ideas of the Providence. Often, the times of prosperity and of striving for good are followed by sufferance periods, which are on one hand the effect of some irrational actions of some passionate factors, and on the other</p>	Providence / Judgment

	hand they are the manifestation of the punishments from God, which have their rationalities, aiming to avert the world from evil. But the Providence and the Judgment, in history, they not only alternate according to époques, but they are sometimes mixed too. There are introduced sometimes in the development of a human life new ideas and social regimes, through harsh means.” (Stăniloae 1992: 187)	
188	“In the unfolding of this life there are active the energies of the godlike rationalities, towards the understanding of which we progress on the measure of our spiritualization. To the spiritual man this unfolding it is at its turn an increasingly transparent mobile symbol, to God, as it appeared to be to the prophets from the Old Testament and to the author of the Apocalypse. The time with the events from within itself, as the space with its things too, they are an environment which God works within.” (Stăniloae 1992: 188)	Divine Uncreated Energies
188	“To the spiritual man, in the depths of the Scripture, of the nature, and of the creation’s unfolding in time, there is present and active the Same Ghost present and active in his deep too, upholding his efforts of purification and illuminating all the things from around him, in order the things to become symbols transparent to divinity. All the things gives the spiritual man the awareness of the fact that “in God we live, we move, and we exist”, as Saint Apostle Paul said in Areopagite (Acts 17: 28).” (Stăniloae 1992: 188)	Holy Trinity: the Holy Ghost
4. Negatively and Apophatically Knowing of God, by and Large		

188-189	<p>“Knowing God through the nature’s rationalities, through the rationalities of the human life’s unfolding and through the rationalities of our knowledge about God, it represents the affirmative way of knowing Him. But, as we have seen, in the progress of this knowledge it increasingly more appear the conscience that God exceeds what one can expressed about Him in concepts and words, and on the peak of this progress this conscience to become preponderant. So, the affirmative way is united, in the beginning lesser and then increasingly more, with the conscience of the untold character of God, and after a long ascension, the knowledge almost totally crosses in a conscience of the helplessness in catching and expressing God in concepts. That’s why, the cogitation uses, alternatively, the affirmative concepts and expressions and the negative ones, and after a long spiritual ascension, it uses almost only the negative ones.” (Stăniloae 1992: 188-189)</p>	Knowledge
189	<p>“The negative concepts and expressions - (of the apophatism, E. l. t.’s n.) - do not express a conscience of the soul that God isn’t known by any means. Namely, the theology of the negation isn’t only a unilateral act, a simple awareness of the impossibility of knowing God, but in it there is also expressed a “feeling” of the God’s infinity, and it is also told about experiencing Him that increases on the measure of the ascension of the spiritual man. This “experiencing” can be describe in positive terms too, but these terms are associated with “correctors” showing that it isn’t about a usual meaning</p>	Knowledge

	of the terms. For instance, this experiencing of God is named as “seeing” God, as “seeing the godlike light”, as “feeling” God. But it is always specified that it is a light above any material light, a ‘understanding feeling” above any feeling etc. All the Eastern Fathers spoke about such a “understanding feeling”, about such a “seeing” God, about such “experiencing” Him.” (Stăniloae 1992: 189)	
189	“In order to discern between the simple denial of the God’s cognoscibility and “experiencing” God, which is achieved not through the human powers but through the Holy Ghost, we use for the first one the expression of <i>negative theology</i> , while we use for the last one the expression of <i>apophatic theology</i> , though sometimes even by using the negative terms one can express a mysterious “experiencing” of God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 189)	Knowledge
189	“We discern between the <i>apophatic theology</i> and the <i>negative theology</i> because of, in the Catholic theology, they know besides the affirmative theology only the negative theology in the sense of an intellectual renunciation to the affirmative terms. It is a merit of Vladimir Lossky that he lately has brought again in the Orthodox conscience the apophatism as dominant feature of the Orthodox theology. And it is his merit too, that he has specified that the apophatism of the Holy Fathers it is something else than the negative intellectual theology known in the Roman-Catholic theology.” (Stăniloae 1992: 189)	Theology

192	<p>“The foundation of the in cognoscibility in the Dionysus’s system it is found by Lossky in the fact that, in the Dionysus’s conception God doesn’t stay in continuity with the world as Plotinus’s “One”. At Plotinus, the mind must leave everything in order to reach at the “One”, because of between them he presented a crumbling of the “One”, and not for this One will be transcendent to everybody and non-cognoscible through nature. Actually, one can reach at the “One after the mind has become “simplified”, for the “One” is in continuity with the multiplicity of the things. But one cannot reach at God either after surpassing all the things, because between the things and God there is a discontinuity of nature which cannot be crossed over from mind’s side. The discontinuity of nature it is expressed through the uncreated character of God and through the created character of all existing things which also we belong to.</p> <p>This is the basis of the divine non-cognoscibility, affirmed through the apophatism of the Eastern theology. This apophatic character was defended, as Lossky says, by the great Cappadocian Fathers ” (Stăniloae 1992: 190)</p>	Knowledge
190	<p>“Lossky find the apophatism to the most of the Holy Fathers as religious attitude towards the divine non-cognoscibility. According to Clement the Alexandrine, the conscience itself of the inaccessibility of God couldn’t be achieved but only by grace. The theme of Moses coming close to God on Mount Sinai, in the first place used by Philo from Alexandria, it</p>	Knowledge

	<p>became the preferred figure of speech to the Holy Fathers, in order to express the experience of the divine inaccessibility. Saint Gregory of Nyssa consecrated an entire special treaty on “Life of Moses”, in which the ascent on Sinai towards the darkness of the non-cognoscibility, it is reckoned as being the contemplation’s way, preferable to the first meeting between Moses and God, when God appeared to Moses in the burning pyre. Moses knows God for he realizes that he cannot know God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 190)</p>	
191	<p>“Through apophatism Lossky doesn’t understand the negative theology as intellectual operation, for, in order to experience the divine non-cognoscibility requires not only a purification of an intellectual nature, as the Platonic one, but it requires a renunciation to the entire created domain. It means an existential self-overcoming engaging the whole man, and it is a supra-conceptual union with God, a union having diverse degrees.” (Stăniloae 1992: 191)</p>	Knowledge
194	<p>“Lossky is right when saying that the apophatism is present on all the levels of the spiritual ascension. But sometimes he created the impression that he accentuates so much the God’s non-cognoscibility than he almost excludes the other side of some knowledge, though he let us understand that he doesn’t actually despise the knowing God by experiencing him, but he only disregards the attempts of knowing God conceptually. But, if we can say everywhere something positive regarding God, than we won’t be right speaking about</p>	Knowledge

	a “total, absolute non-cognoscibility”, as Lossky sometimes says. This comes from the fact that, allegedly, he hasn’t preoccupied himself with diverse levels of the apophatism.” (Stăniloae 1992: 194)	
194-195	“In reality, the non-cognoscibility it mysteriously intertwines with the knowledge and, on the measure we ascend towards the divine mystery we are filled up with more knowledge, of course it is about another kind of knowledge, but we are filled up too with the conscience that the divine nature is above any knowledge. Or, in the terms of Saint Gregory Palamas, not because of the absence of the knowledge the experience on the higher levels it is no longer called as knowledge, but due to its supra-abundance.” (Stăniloae 1992: 194-195)	Knowledge
195	“Saint Gregory Palamas rejected the idea of Barlaam that according to the created nature there doesn’t follow anything else but the divine nature, which is totally inaccessible and non-cognoscible. Though he knows the difference between the divine Being and the divine energies, Lossky doesn’t occupy himself with the seeing of the godlike light, but he speaks only in a general manner about a somehow lived not-knowing of God, a fact admitted by the newer catholic theology too.” (Stăniloae 1992: 195)	Theology
5. The Levels of the Apophatism: the Negative Theology; the Apophatism at the End of the Prayer; the Apophatism of the Seeing of the Light of God		
195	“To the Orthodox, after knowing the divine rationalities and	Knowledge

	<p>energies through the mediation of the nature, there follows the knowing of the unveiled divine energies. Of course, knowing these energies it is accompanied, especially in the second case, by apophatism. In addition to that, knowing the energies wrapped up in nature it is accompanied by the awareness about not knowing the unveiled divine energies, and knowing these unveiled divine energies it is accompanied by the awareness about the absolute non-cognoscibility of the divine Being. Thus, the apophatism is present in the same time with the knowledge, or alternatively, on both levels, but it is more accentuated on the second level.” (Stăniloae 1992: 195)</p>	
195	<p>“Between knowing the divine rationalities and energies through nature, a knowledge having something apophatic in it, and seeing them in an unveiled manner, there take place a hiatus. This hiatus represents an apophatism almost unmixed with any positive element of knowledge. This is the intermediary apophatism which we have forsaken any mental operation within - even the denial operations - but we haven’t received the light yet. We are highlighting here the fact that the whole time while we are knowing through concepts the energies from within nature, we are accompanied by the awareness about the fact that these concepts are unfitted for the energies manifested through nature and, more than that, the concepts are unfitted to the divine unveiled energies, and the concepts are totally unfitted to the Being of God. In this</p>	Knowledge

	sense, not only the intellectual negative theology, but also noticing these energies by feeling them, they always accompany or alternate with the affirmative theology.” (Stăniloae 1992: 195)	
196	<p>“The intellectual negative theology is the first form of apophatism. But like the affirmative theology doesn’t exist without the negative theology, likewise both the negative theology and the affirmative theology do not lack the company of an apophatism of the unexplainably feeling these energies. But by being elevated above what the nature can give us, the awareness about the existence of a hiatus or the awareness about the total insufficiency of the concepts determined from nature, and of our mind’s helplessness and of our feeling’s helplessness, of knowing the divinity through themselves, we reach ever higher levels, namely the apophatism of the negative theology and of the untold feeling of these energies it becomes almost total. This apophatism is the supreme awareness about our impossibility of knowing God through human spiritual activity. On the moment we forsake any consideration of the concepts formulated out of nature and any preoccupation of even denying these concepts, namely when we are elevated above any feeling of them apophatically, we enter a state of silence produced by prayer. Now we are on the second level of apophatism. It is a much stronger feeling, but it still is a feeling in darkness of the divine energies, a feeling that has surpassed the intellectual negative theology</p>	Knowledge

	and the apophatic feeling accompanying it.” (Stăniloae 1992: 196)	
196	“We reckon that the second level of the apophatism mustn’t be indentified to the supreme level of the spiritual accession, as it seems that Lossky does. Also, we reckon that neither the <i>Mystical Theology</i> of Dionysus the Areopagite takes this second level in consideration. This is for Saint Gregory Palamas showed, in his polemics with Barlaam, that the Areopagitic texts refer to other darkness too, namely to the supra-luminous darkness which doesn’t mean either only a negative theology, nor only to feeling God in darkness, but they are something else than the theology by negation and even than some apophatic feeling Him in darkness. These are darkness not because there is no light in them, but because they are a too big abundance of light.” (Stăniloae 1992: 196)	Knowledge
196-197	“It is right, that not everybody is elevated to seeing the godlike light, and the godlike light it isn’t a permanent state. To the ones who hasn’t been yet elevated there, or on the moments the ones seeing the godlike light aren’t there, the negative theology accompanied by some feeling of the godlike energies produced by prayer, it is the highest level to them. In the best scenario, they reach the apophatism of the silence or of the more intense feeling, but still in darkness, of the godlike energies, namely to the apophatism on second degree. Saint Gregory Palamas discerns between seeing the divine light, both in the negative theology - as inferior intellectual	Divine Uncreated Energies

	operation, as a work of the mind that cogitates those affirmative concepts having a certain intellectual content that doesn't fit God, a work accompanied also by some apophatic feeling – and from the second degree apophatism, within which there is no intellectual operation, but it takes place the stopping of any cogitation, in the conscience of the total helplessness of understanding God with our mind and feeling Him exclusively, in darkness.” (Stăniloae 1992: 196-197)	
197	“Saint Gregory Palamas, beside the negative theology which still is an intellectual operation, for the mind thinks at the notions it removes and it is in the same time carried by the evidence that God is more than the removed notions – he know about one more apophatic state of the soul, before the soul coming to the holy light. It is a state being born during prayer, when the soul leaves all the thought related to the things, and it gets out of himself. But this exiting (or ecstasy) still doesn't mean seeing the light. It is therefore a lived apophatism, experienced in a much more intensive degree than that staying at the basis of the mental operation which removes from God the positive attributes.” (Stăniloae 1992: 197)	Seeing the Godlike Light
197	“Unlike Barlaam, who sustained that seeing the godlike light it isn't a negative theology, and therefore the negative theology represents the supreme level of the spiritual ascension, Saint Gregory Palamas said: “This above mind work it is superior to the work in the frame of the mind; they do not see God, but	Seeing the Godlike Light

	not in the sense that they do not see anything, as do the ones who cogitate God by negation, but they see through the sight itself what it is above seeing” (Palamas, <i>The Romanian Philokalia</i> , volume VII, p. 306 (head 26)). This is for “the ones who occupy themselves with the most-blessed sight, not by negation but by seeing in Ghost, they know what exceeds the sight, by this deifying work” (idem, p. 307).” (Stăniloae 1992: 197)	
199	“The negative theology is only an anticipative icon of the seeing of the godlike light, but it still isn’t that light itself.” (Stăniloae 1992: 199)	Seeing the Godlike Light
200	“Saint Gregory Palamas subtly discerned between seeing, from outside, the darkness which God veils Himself in, for the human mind working above its powers, and penetrating the interior of that darkness by the fact that the mind is attracted there by God Himself. The first one is the negative theology and it could say, at most, that the darkness which God inhabits in, it is at its turn beyond any things’ images and concepts.” (Stăniloae 1992: 200)	Seeing the Godlike Light
200-201	“The negative theology is something else than seeing the godlike light, namely an inferior level to that. Likewise, between the negative theology and seeing the godlike light there is an intermediary apophatism, experienced in an existential mode by the whole our being, in a culminant state of the prayer, as feeling God in darkness and as total silence of the mind too. The first two states could be reached by man	Seeing the Godlike Light

	<p>through his natural powers, helped, of course, by the grace received at Baptism and in the Mystery of the Holy Chrism. Through them, the mind reaches close to the precipice that separates the mind's knowledge from God, but still is on this side, on the human realm. But when the mind is kidnapped by God, the mind crosses beyond, at seeing the godlike light. Of course, seeing the godlike light still is accompanied by an apophatism, which we could call it as of third degree. But this is no longer an apophatism in the sense of void, as the two previous ones. This apophatism consists, on one hand, of the conscience of the one who sees that light that that light cannot be comprised in concepts or expressed in words, and on the other hand, it consists of the conscience that above that light there is the divine Being, Who remains totally inaccessible, and that the accessible light itself remains an infinite reserve. But the godlike light has a positive content of knowledge above knowledge, of apophatic knowledge, of experience and of feeling above the natural experience and feeling." (Stăniloae 1992: 200-201)</p>	
201	<p>"Seeing the godlike light it represents the kidnapping of the mind through the godlike light beyond the precipice between us and God, so that the mind is no longer of this realm from here – namely of the natural knowledge - but on that realm from beyond." (Stăniloae 1992: 201)</p>	Seeing the Godlike Light
201-202	<p>"Hausherr's affirmation, that the Hesychasm has forsaken the oriental tradition of uniting the affirmation with the negation</p>	Theology

in expressing the mysterious experiencing, by preserving only the affirmation of seeing the godlike light, it isn't a correct affirmation. The Treaty III from the First Triad and from the following Triad, of Saint Gregory Palamas, they do not cease calling the seeing of the godlike light as "knowledge above understanding" or "nescience in sense of surpassing". The godlike light seen in a not-understood way, it remains to the Hesychasm too, a mystery which doesn't exclude, but it implies the apophatism, but without letting only the apophatism as standing alone. What distinguishes this apophatism of seeing above sight, of the light, it is the fact that this apophatism isn't a void, but it is an overwhelming godlike presence; and it isn't a feeling in darkness of the presence of God but, a contrary, it is an overwhelming experience of this presence. Besides that, the godlike light cannot be known by whomsoever in its entirety, from the beginning, but knowing the godlike light it is an eternal process, according to the theology of Gregory Palamas. The awareness about this endless reserve of light which one feels in the experienced light, but it isn't properly-said, experienced, as also the awareness about the absolute non-cognoscibility of the divine being it is a ceaseless experience within the light's seer. If he still becomes wholly a light, this won't mean that he will fully understand himself, but he becomes to himself even fuller of mysteries, as a deified being, above nature, inspiring to himself a continuous amazement

	about himself.” (Stăniloae 1992: 201-202)	
202	“In the West, the one who understood this positive “darkness” of Dionysus, it was the Cardinal Nicholas Cusanus, who explained this darkness not as a lack of light or as a real mixing between light and darkness, as J. Hausherr would have wanted the Hesychasm to do it, but as an abundance of light that overwhelms the sight just because of that, and which can be called no only as darkness but also as light.” (Stăniloae 1992: 202)	Theology
6. The Dynamic of the Report between the Negative Theology and the Affirmative Theology		
202-203	“The negative theology still is a mental operation, the last mental operation, but mixed – as the prayer is too – with e feeling of the helplessness of comprising God. The negative theology stays in connection with the contemplation about God through nature, through history, through the Holy Scripture, through art, through dogmas and, by and large, though everything that is in the middle between us and God, either as an external reality or as system of symbolic concepts and images. For any reality, concept, or symbolic image, on one hand it mirrors God and on the other hand it awakens within us the evidence of the non-explicitly feeling that God is totally different, in comparison to these ones, they challenge us to deny all the positive attributes which, on their basis, we have granted to God. Namely, all the things from the middle, by opening us the perspective towards God, they place us in the same time in the front of the infinite precipice of the	Knowledge

	<p>divine reality, which we cannot comprise with our mind, and which, in the first place, they do not show us anything of what the created realities, the concept, and the symbolic images show us. But our mind facing this precipice still doesn't renounce looking at things too, at concepts and at symbolic images. But our mind moves its sight from these ones to that one, ascertaining that these ones do not offer the means for characterizing that one. By trying, sort of speak, to measure the abyss by using any measure from the world, namely by using each feature or image, or each concept formed on the basis of the created things, the mind ascertains that no one is fitted to that. And then the mind throws all of them one by one. Therefore, the negative theology is a mental operation for it studies the content of the diverse features and concepts in comparison to the divine abyss, as lived, somehow, by it, with its feeling, and it ascertains that they are insufficient." (Stăniloae 1992: 202-203)</p>	
203-204	<p>"In a certain sense, the negative theology still is a rational operation, by being an exact weighing of each concept, whose margins only now appear in all their clearness to the mind. But for this comprising of the defined content of a concept it is done in the same time with the throwing of the sight upon the godlike abyss which the rationality cannot comprise, but which the mind is intuited by a sight or by a feeling of another nature, this operation, though partially mental, it isn't only rational, it isn't only deductive, but it has an</p>	Knowledge

	<p>intuitive element too, of ascertaining what it is borderless and therefore it cannot be defined. It is a rational operation which the mind ascertains with, though, the insufficiency of the rationality. It is an operation which the nature itself becomes aware of its own insufficiency through, and of its helplessness of noticing the infinite and totally different One. The mind doesn't totally leave with its sight the solid shore of the defined things, but, by being helped by some kind of feeling of it, it moves its sight from them to the godlike abyss, it stays in balance between those two. <i>The negative theology doesn't renounce at or it doesn't forget about the positive concepts collected from the created world, as these concepts would be totally useless.</i> This is for the negative theology, even if it ascertains that these concepts do not fit God, though, only in comparison to these concepts it ascertains that God is different. The mind thinks at these concepts, on by one, when denying these concepts to God. That's why the negative theology it doesn't make useless an enriching of our spirit with ever higher and increasingly nuanced concepts. This is for by measuring the godhead with these concepts, and by finding the godhead as always not-comprised, the mind is overwhelmed increasingly more by feeling the godhead's overwhelming greatness. In this sense "knowing God is a dynamic process", as a Christian thinker said." (Stăniloae 1992: 203-204)</p>	
204-205	"The negative theology still needs the positive terms in order	Knowledge

to deny them. The higher the positive terms are, the more subtle they are, the more they express not only through themselves something from the richness of the power and of the imagination of God Who has created the realities expresses by these positive terms, but they also occasion through their denial an icon (in negative) of the divine greatness which is above them. The negative theology doesn't justify a law of the laziness, an abdication from rationality, but it demands a continuous elevation of the rationality's scaffoldings, in order the limitless of the divine ocean to appear to us, from ever higher levels, in vision that to impress us increasingly deeper. The negative theology, far from pretending us to renounce forever to the rational concepts, it wants us to increase those concepts. The negative theology is the supra-rational point of the tireless straining of the rationality which mustn't end ever its researches upon nature, upon the human life, and upon Scripture. Any progress in knowing the physical, biological, spiritual-human processes from the bosom of the creation, it means a new state on the scaffold which the negative theology – driven by a feeling of the mind – it takes and even deeper and more comprising look at the divine limitlessness, which at its turn makes possible the continuous elevation of this scaffolding. That's why we consider as inappropriate the contempt which some theologians speak about the positive theology with. If the world and the Scripture are the revelations of God, and

	<p>these ones tell us something positive about him, then, obviously, the positive theology will have its rights. What if we would say nothing positive about God, not even that He exists? Wouldn't have been in such a case endangered the religious life itself? What would have happen if we hadn't said that God is great and He is full of love? If God hadn't unveiled Himself through creation and through the supra-natural revelation we wouldn't have known Him at all. But since he has deigned to unveil Himself through these ones, we must use them in order to say something positive about Him. It is right that the positive theology is a theology of the infinite, but far from excluding the infinite, it makes possible the elevation towards the infinite. Only if the positive theology isn't alternated with the negative theology, it becomes "a pragmatic-juridical, exoteric-social science", which by being infinite and inexhaustible it cannot be circumscribed in rational concepts." (Stăniloae 1992: 204-205)</p>	
205	<p>"We must say that not only the positive theology continuously needs the negative theology, but also the other way around. The one who makes negative theology he still borrows the terms of the positive theology, and then he continuously denies these terms. Even more, he must has tried and he must continuously try to get closer to godhead with the terms of the positive theology in order to ascertain that these terms do not fit the godhead and, consequently, to deny these terms. In other words, someone cannot do negative theology</p>	Knowledge

	except by alternating it to the positive theology. The cause for this fact stays in the human spirit as well, but it doesn't stay only in the human spirit, being deeper." (Stăniloae 1992: 205)	
205-208	<p>"The two deeper causes due to which the negative theology must be alternated to the positive theology are:</p> <p>a) On one hand, the last creator principle it has given the existence and it can explain the existence, it cannot be like the worlds itself is; otherwise, it wouldn't be an ultimate and transcendent to the world principle; otherwise, the uncreated being wouldn't differ from the created world. But, on the other hand, this principle and this source must comprise everything that can explain the existence and the content of the world. Therefore, the absolute and transcendent principle cannot comprise any of the qualities which are in the world or in a certain part of the world. It cannot be a part of the world neither can be a foundation of the world, of the same essence with the world, neither the existence itself as we know it, because this existence requires an explanation in something superior that is superior to this existence and different from it. This principle cannot be except the negation of the existence, if we understand through this the imperfect form of the world's existence – the only one we know; this principle is the negation of any category of this existence, shortly speaking: it is the non-existence. But for the absolute principle is the source of the power which has been made everything, which has made possible the existence we know</p>	Knowledge

and which explains the nature of all things, it must stay in some connection with the things and with the world; it must have a certain resemblance to the things which creator principle and foundation is to. The existence, with its entire diversity, it must have something in itself that makes the existence possible on the ground of some rationalities and energies, which correspond to the diverse features of the world.

Thus, right in the report of this creator principle with the created world it stays the cause due to which we must speak about the principle in contradictory terms, of positive and of negative theology: this principle is fitted in a certain mode all the world's features, but, in the same time, none of this features fits it adequately, not even the existence. This principle resembles to each thing and it allows to be participated by all things, but in the same time this principle is absolutely "different", totally unlike them. On one hand this principle is inaccessible to understanding, for it totally transcends the understanding; but because, on one hand, something that couldn't be understood in no way it couldn't be the principle of the world, so that it must be somewhat understood, in order to be possible all things to be explained through it.

Both ways of approaching the absolute, the positive one and the negative one, they are equally necessary and legitimate, as they are equally insufficient, for the prime cause being, as

Dionysus the Areopagite said, above affirmations and negations. Only both of them together can guide the mind's sight rightly towards Him, but neither both of them together can reach to Him. If God had been only an infinite in report with the world, and not also different from the world, the negative theology wouldn't have been necessary. It would have been enough to stretch through our imagination any world's feature to infinite, through the so-called *via eminentiae per analogiam* and we would have had a feature of God. But this would have meant that God is in a continuity of nature with the world. So, if there would be a difference between God and the world, this wouldn't be a difference of nature between God and the world. But God isn't only infinite, but he is also absolutely different from the world. Therefore only *via eminentiae* or the method of the analogy, it isn't enough in order to correct the insufficiencies of the positive theology. God is absolutely indeterminable, not so much for any determination is a rounding in finite frames and He is infinite, but rather for no known category of the existence doesn't fit Him, since not even the most general category, namely that of existence, it doesn't fit Him. Actually, His existence isn't framed, to say so, in the wider genre of the existence as such. But He is outside and above the existence in general; not even the terms "is" or "exists", which we designate everything that is most general with, what it is common to all things and beings, these terms do not fit Him, for He at His turn does not

get us out of the created order. That's why it isn't enough in order to characterize Him only to amplify to infinite the features from within world, not even correcting these features through an analogue attributing, which considers that must be denied even the equivocal idea of analogy, no matter how many possibilities lets in order to keep God in a great difference from the world, though, on the other hand, the things from within world must have a certain analogy in God.

b) Another cause which the negative theology it is necessary for, but in alternance to the positive theology, it is the fact that the being of God is different than His manifestations, or different from what His works can show it like. All the attributes which we call God with, they refer to these manifestations and works, showing their effects in the world's things and features, and not to the divine being. That's why, on one hand, we refer to God countless attributes, and on the other hand, He is the not-called One, the One Who, according to His Being isn't fitted by any name. When we think at God's manifestations, we make positive affirmations about Him; but when we thing at His Being, we deny all affirmations. The attributes we give to God refer to the divine energies descending to us, as Saint Basil said, and not to His Being that remains inaccessible; the attributes refer to the powers launched as some rays from God, creating everything and upholding the diverse aspects of the world. *Being* it is the name given to the being-maker energy; *wisdom*, it is called

	<p>the wisdom-giver energy, as said Dionysus the Areopagite. But above all these there is the divine “hidden”, to Whom no name can be given, and Who doesn’t enter any relation, and Who doesn’t share Himself at all. (...) But this hidden remains above these powers, for He is above being, or above godhead, above life, above any name, and above any impartation. Of course, the attributes - which we have borrowed from the effect the divine energies have within world –, they do not reach adequately not even these energies. That’s why denying the attributes it is justified even while thinking at them. But we still attribute them to God by adding them the coefficient of utilization <i>per analogiam</i>.” (Stăniloae 1992: 205-208)</p>	
209	<p>“In the fact that according to His hidden Being God is non-cognoscible, and according to His works which come within world and they are mirrored in their created effects He is cognoscible, it consists the necessity of expressing God in an antinomic manner, namely in positive terms which are immediately removed by the negative terms. Thus, on one hand, we must say that God is life, according to His life-maker power, which He manifests working within world, and on the other hand we must say that God isn’t life, for the hidden life which the life-maker power stats from, and which works within world, it cannot be identified to that one, because of being much more than that. God is being, He is wisdom, He is power, and He is kindness, according to the power starting from Him, according to the manifestations</p>	Knowledge

	from within world; but His Being, as source of the countless powers, he is none of these ones, neither is Him all of them together, because of being more than all of these ones and being totally indeterminable. All of these ones are out of the Being of God, uncreated and not-separated from His Being, but they still aren't identical to His Being." (Stăniloae 1992: 209)	
209	"The Being of God isn't any of these attributes, but not in the sense of missing them, but in sense of surpassing them, said Palamas. God, on one hand, he is existence, and on the other hand, he isn't existence, but not in the sense that He wouldn't exist, but as the One Who is above existence." (Stăniloae 1992: 209)	Knowledge
209-210	"Our soul and our soul's manifestations offer an analogy to this report between the Being and the powers of God, namely they illustrate the need for alternating, relating to God, the positive terms to the negative terms. For instance, we will say that God is: mind, will, feeling, movement, if we think at His acts of thinking, willing, feeling, and moving. But we immediately must rectify it, by saying that He is in neither thinking, nor will, neither feeling, nor movement, because of, as source of all these acts, he is more than all of them and He doesn't exhaust Himself in them, for He remains always above them, as a headquarters differing from them and indeterminable." (Stăniloae 1992: 209-210)	Knowledge
210-211	"According to the conception of the Holy Fathers, there is a	Knowledge

mystery of the things and of the beings, but there especially is a mystery of the divine being. In the negative theology it is expressed the awareness regarding this mystery of the divinity, as in the “I know that I know nothing” of Socrates it is expressed the same awareness regarding the general mystery of the things. But this mystery is not placed like a wall of absolute and immovable darkness in front of our mind. It would have been so if it hadn’t had any manifestation. But out of it there spring out endless lights. And these light show His presence and His contours. Actually, the mystery means an interminable reserve of truth which, by infinitely unveiling its aspects, it always remains an inexhaustible reserve; the mystery means the spiritual bread for the mind, which, by always being imparted to all the minds, it never ends. Without a divine being transcendent to the knowledge and eternally inexhaustible in His manifestations of light and power, we would soon finish the work of knowing the truth. But this would have meant that the truth is limited and our thirst for knowledge it would have been itself finite. But we see than cannot be like that. If this had been the case, our being would have reached an insupportable boredom and even our eternity itself would have been meaningless. As some sort of palliative to this boredom there have been conceived the reincarnations. But these too are a repetition or a variety on the same plan.” (Stăniloae 1992: 210-211)

211	<p>“Without the ceaseless emanations of light, of creator and consummator power, the mystery would be deprived of a purpose of fertilization of the spirit, namely it would be as non-existing, because of not contributing in anything to the light’s increasing. Through the lights ceaselessly emitted by the mystery, we are given the possibility of formulating positive affirmations about truth. But these affirmations do not express the entire truth, but only splinters of truth. But this still doesn’t discourage us. By existing there an always fecund being, we have the possibility of an infinite progress in knowing the truth. This eternally new mystery is the infinite Person and the thirst for it cannot be had except by a person. The eternal dynamics of the knowledge implies not only the inexhaustible mystery and the apophatism belonging to it, but also the relation between the Supreme Person and the created person.” (Stăniloae 1992: 211)</p>	Knowledge
211	<p>“The affirmative theology expresses the “crumbles” one can notice out of the truth’s “being”. The negative theology expresses the awareness or the evidence that these crumbles aren’t the whole, that through them the knowing of the truth it hasn’t come to an end. The negative theology expresses the awareness about or the evidence of the inexhaustible mystery that is as such the inexhaustible source of the truth which will be known in the future. The affirmative theology sums the things we have found out until now. The negative theology reassures us about the future knowledge. Far from being,</p>	Knowledge

	therefore, a discouraging witness, the negative theology it is just that invigorating our spirit with the endless perspectives which the mystery, as inexhaustible bosom of truths, of revelations, it opens to the spirit.” (Stăniloae 1992: 211)	
7. The Clean Prayer		
211	“Saint Gregory Palamas know as a level superior to the negative theology a fuller and more existential apophatism, accomplished through the clean prayer. This is an ecstasy of the interior silence, a total stopping from thinking in front of the divine mystery, before descending the godlike light from above in the mind stopped thus by amazement.” (Stăniloae 1992: 211)	Prayer
212	“The prayer itself has several levels, each level corresponding to one of the levels of the spiritual ascension which the man is on. This is for the prayer must always accompany the man in his ascension.” (Stăniloae 1992: 212)	Prayer
212	“Letting aside the prayer asking for material good and which is an inferior prayer, we could judge the progress in the worthy to be praised prayer, according to the following criteria: according to the prayer’s object, according to the prayer’s more or less consummate focusing, and according to the soul’s state of quietude after praying. Regarding the first ones, Evagrius recommend that before praying: “to clean yourself of passions and secondly to deliver yourself of nescience and forgetfulness; in the third place, clean yourself	Prayer

	<p>of all temptation and desertion” (<i>Heads about Prayer in The Romanian Philokalia</i>, vol. I, p. 80). In the generality of these three kinds of prayers differing according to their content, they would correspond to the three levels of the spiritual ascension: the purification, the illumination, and the union. In what concerns the last criterion, on any level, the true prayer tends to keep the mind not-stolen by any thought or by any worry; on the measure it succeeds in banishing the thoughts more fully and for a longer period of time, it is a more consummate prayer. The truly consummate prayer is the clean prayer, namely that prayer done by the mind when the mind has reached the capacity of easily banishing away and for a long time any thought when praying. But the man reaches this capacity only after he has cleaned himself of passions. Not even the innocent thought will disturb the mind when praying, if the prayer is consummate. That’s why, the clean prayer is being done only after the mind has been elevated above the contemplation of the seen nature and above concepts, when the mind no longer deals with any image or any concept. That’s why we reckon that one can know the clean prayer also for the fact that this prayer no longer has any object but, after crossing over all object in order of their increasingly higher values, the mind only asks now for the mercy of God, for the mind feels Him as Master Whose mercy the mind depends on.” (Stăniloae 1992: 212)</p>	
213	“We can add two more criteria measuring the prayer’s	Prayer

	progress: the diminution of the words and the multiplication of the tears.” (Stăniloae 1992: 213)	
213	“In its peak, the prayer is a clean prayer by the fact that it no longer has any object and it no longer uses any word, but the mind gathered back from anything it is aware of being in front of God; that’s why this prayer is also called as the prayer of the mind.” (Stăniloae 1992: 213)	Prayer
213	“Of course, not even on the highest peaks of the spiritual life, the mind cannot be always empty of content, even of simple, dispassionate ideas about things. It, though, the one who strives for consummation he is required to make his prayer increasingly uninterrupted, this is actually an increasingly remembrance of the name of God or of the name of Jesus, not with the exclusion of the innocent ideas but parallel to them, as means of maintain in cleanness the one who prays. So, the “ceaseless prayer” is something else than the “clean or mental prayer” during which the mind has no idea, no thought, except the shapeless thought to God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 213)	Prayer
213	“Of course, between the “ceaseless prayer” and the “clean or mental prayer” there is a tight connection. The same few words are used by both of these prayers. Then, someone won’t be able to reach the consummate prayer at once, this being the consummate prayer, if he hasn’t habituated himself to keep God always in his thought, and if the thinking at God it hasn’t become sweetness to him. That’s why the clean prayer isn’t except the flame raising up increasingly often from the	Prayer

	fire of the ceaseless prayer.” (Stăniloae 1992: 213)	
213	<p>“By and large, the Eastern spirituality recommend the following conditions in order the mind to reach the state of the clean prayer:</p> <p>1) The mind must turn back from the outside things to its inside, towards its “heart” by leaving any object.</p> <p>Through mind they understand, of course, the mind’s work overflowing towards the sensitive world, as Saint Gregory Palamas explains. And the heart, which the mind must get back towards, it is just the mind’s center which the mind by being at, it no longer looks outside, towards things, but it looks towards God. The mind, by turning back within heart, it turns back “home”, as it is said in the <i>Method</i> of Nicephorus from Loneliness. Diadochus calls this center sometimes as “the mind’s rooms” and sometimes as “the heart’s deep”. And when he understand through “mind’ the mind’s work, then its center he calls it as heart, and when he understands through mind the mind’s being, then he calls as center the “heart’s deep” or “the heart’s rooms” etc.”</p> <p>2. The mind’s preoccupation must be maintained only with a few words addressed to Jesus, namely by perseveringly remembering Him, and this remembrance is a means that helps the mind to gather up from scattering and it guides the mind towards the unique target which the mind must reach at, since even the cleanest prayer still must maintain the thought of the presence of Jesus.</p>	Prayer

	<p>At Diadochus these words are only two in number, namely the strict essential in order to keep our thought to Jesus as our Master: “Lord Jesus”. Later, some other words have been added to these two words. Through them it isn’t expressed a partial request, because if that was the case, it would give the mind an object, a defined form, and therefore it is expressed only the general request for the mercy from Christ, or for feeling the need for His mercy. Behold the usual content of this prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me the sinner.” These words comprise in the same time with the awareness about the presence of Jesus, the awareness of the own sinfulness and of the need for mercy from Jesus. These words express a report of the man’s dependency not on an impersonal force but on the loving mercy from the supreme Person. This feeling doesn’t need concepts in order to be lived, but it creates and it upholds a unitary, simple, and existential state of humbleness, in front of the Merciful Jesus.” (Stăniloae 1992: 213-214)</p>	
214	<p>“If the mind can renounce to images and concepts, it still won’t be able to by and large renounce to some work or feeling, except for short moments of silence or of internal kidnapping, obtained at the end of the prayer. That’s why, if one stops the mind from going out and it forces the mind to turn back towards its center, namely towards “heart”, he must give the mind another content; namely that content which we want our mind to gather into.” (Stăniloae 1992: 214)</p>	Prayer

215-217	<p>“By turning the mind back, namely by tuning the mind’s work into heart, or into the heart’s deep, and by having as ceaseless preoccupation the short prayer addressed to Jesus, one can obtain several things:</p> <p>a) The mind (the mind’s work) by no longer spending time for looking at the external things, it will no longer be in danger to be stolen by passionate thoughts. Thus, the mind overcomes its own fickleness and scattering, by becoming unitary and focused, or simplified.</p> <p>b) Through this focusing and through the name Jesus the mind defends its own inside against sinful thoughts. Sometimes they tell that the heart must be guarded against the passionate thoughts attempting to enter the heart, or that the heart must be cleaned of the thoughts which dominate the mind. But Diadochus of Photice explained that this heart that can be penetrated by passionate thoughts it isn’t actually the heart itself, but here is about the regions from around the heart, namely, by and large here, is about the soul’s inside. Here try to penetrate the “ghosts from beneath”, as says Saint Gregory Palamas, out of the passionate conscious. Guarding the mind, in this sense, it means not to let unwatched any part of the soul or any movement of the body. In another sense, guarding the heart means actually guarding the mind, in order the mind not to leave the heart.</p> <p>c) Even if these thoughts cannot enter the heart, but crowding around the heart they no longer let the heart to open. By</p>	Prayer
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gathering as a cloud around the heart, the heart loses its habituation of openly looking towards the sky. This has become to the heart a simple virtuality no longer making its presence felt.

At the beginning, the mind that wants to turn back towards the heart, that mind find the heart's place with difficulty. That mind must fight the thoughts from around the heart for a long time, in order to cut road towards the heart and in order to open the heart. Namely, the mind regains with difficulty its habituation of looking through heart at God, of preoccupying itself with Him, of reopening its eye that has as function to see the spiritual things. When the mind's work that was accustomed to occupy itself with the exterior things, not it has regained its habit of occupying itself with God, namely when the mind has fully turned back inside, within heart, and it has opened the heart, then the mind meets there God face to face, without seeing Him through some image or to cogitate Him through some concept, but by directly living His presence, or by feeling itself as being in His presence. By penetrating the heart, the mind comes across to Jesus Christ, Who has been there since Baptism. In other words, the conscious work of the mind penetrates our supra- or trans-conscious, which the grace of Christ is within, and it sets in work the great treasures from there and the capacity of noticing the godlike realities. This is for the mind is set in a living communication with Christ Himself, Who is the source

	<p>of all powers and meanings from above nature.</p> <p>The mental or clean prayer doesn't mediate a knowing of God through creatures, but through the depths of the own soul, through the "heart". This means actually directly feeling Him, for the man forgets even about his heart when, gathered in his heart, he feels the presence of Jesus Christ, in the atmosphere of the Kingdom of Heavens being inside him. Saint Isaac the Syrian says that then it ceases from within mind even the prayer's movement, for the mind is kidnapped by the godhead and by the greatness of the Master, Whose wonderful presence is being felt. He said: "So the prayer is interrupted in the time of the prayer, from its movement, and the mind is caught and sunk in the amazement of the kidnapping and it forgives the desire from its demand" (<i>Word XXXII</i>).</p> <p>d) This state is also called as openness of the heart also for the fact that the heart is crossed through by the love for Jesus. And until the mind doesn't start feeling a pleasure in perseveringly remembering the name of Jesus, in the same time looking at the things from inside, this is a sign that the "heart" hasn't been found yet, or that the heart hasn't been opened yet. But it is enough the mind to do this effort of turning back in itself and of perseveringly remembering the name of Jesus. This is for the mind by doing so, the Lord Himself removes the heart's wall and he shows Himself, attracting the mind to Himself and planting into mind the love</p>	
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	for Him. Or: "The grace itself cogitates together with the soul and shouts together with the soul: Lord Jesus Christ. This is for we necessarily need His help for, by uniting and by sweetening all our thought with His sweetness, to be us able to move with the whole our heart towards remembering God and our Father" (<i>The Romanian Philokalia</i> , vol. I, p. 353)." (Stăniloae 1992: 215-217)	
217	"In the world of the Eastern monasticism they tried to find some methods consisting of supporting the mind's effort of turning inwardly, by using some procedures which the body is employed in. These procedures are based, by and large, on the interdependence between soul and body, or on the unity of their movements. As the soul's states are extended in the external attitudes and in the bodily movements, likewise the external gestures and positions, if accompanied by concentrating the thought upon them, the considerably influence the soul's moods. A humble soul makes the body kneeling, but also a kneeling accompanied by focusing the thought on God it produces within soul a state of humbleness. The abstract spiritualism of a part of the Western Christendom, manifested on the field of the religious practice, it is unnatural. Such spiritualism it has forced its attitudes, and thus it has been accomplished only by forcedly stopping the wave of feeling born within soul and started towards body, or which by being born out of a bodily attitude extends itself upon the soul." (Stăniloae 1992: 217)	Prayer

8. The Methods for Facilitating the Clean Prayer		
217-223	<p>“The methods formed in East in order to facilitate, through some procedures, the elevation of the mind to the clean prayer, better said the variants of the same method for the differences between them consist of the fact that each variant insists upon different details than other methods do, are the followings:</p> <p>1) The method bearing the name of Saint Simeon the New Theologian. It is called <i>The Method of the Holy Prayer and Attention</i> and the old-Greek text has been published for the first time by Hausherr in the year 1927. It is the oldest one we know, amongst the written versions, being in a codex from the end of the XI Century of from the beginning of the XII Century (Vat. Gr. 658). This proof was brought by M. Jugie against J. Hausherr, who, by adhering to the opinion of some authors from before him that this method cannot belong to Simeon, he argued for the first time that the method belonged to Nicephorus the Monk, who lived in the second half of the XIII Century. But this opinion had to definitively be renounced to, consequently to a text which we have been lucky to find it amongst the inedited writings of Palamas which we have published in the book about <i>The Life and the Teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas</i> (Sibiu, 1938, pp. 54-55). Palamas, for he knew the method of Nicephorus the Monk, he didn't identify it to that one known under the name of Simeon the New Theologian, but he acknowledged this one too as author of a</p>	Prayer

different method.

So, even if Saint Simeon the New Theologian wasn't the author of this method, this method still is older than the method of Nicephorus the Monk from the XIII Century, since Gregory Palamas received from his antecessors, amongst whom some of them knew Nicephorus the Monk, this tradition.

The method of Saint Simeon the New Theologian starts by showing that there are three kinds of prayers. The first two ones are deceiving, and only the third one is "giving birth to light". The first kind of prayer is accompanied by the work of the imagination. The one who prays raises his hands, his eyes, and his mind to heavens and starts imagining with his mind the godlike things, the heavenly goods, the angelic groups, the dwelling places of the saints, shortly: everything he has heard from the Holy Scripture he gathers them in his mind, in the time of the prayer, moving his soul towards the live for God by those imaginings, and even shedding some tears. Thus he starts getting haughty without realizing that, and he reckons that this is a grace from God. Sometimes this type of prayer is accompanied by pretended extraordinary phenomena, as luminous visions, sensations of fragrances, unreal voices. All of these are the traces of a getting astray that can lead the man to madness. The cause is that the man hasn't achieved firstly the dispassion and the virtues. He is amongst the beginners.

In the second type of prayer, the mind, after it has turned back from the sensitive things and from the sensations coming from outside, for a while it focuses upon the prayer's words, and then it examines the thoughts rushing into the soul trying to banish them away. This is a struggle that doesn't allow him to settle down and to work his virtues. The great danger stalking the one who indulge himself to this kind of prayer it is the vain glory, making him to despise the other people. This second type of prayer – as the *Method* says – it surpasses the first kind of prayer, as a night with full moon surpasses the night without stars and light, or like the youth surpasses the spiritual childhood. This is the phase of the psalmody, of the sweetening with gentle words. In the first phase one couldn't psalmody because of "one cannot sing to the Lord in foreign country, or in a passionate heart". This is the prayer of the spiritually advanced ones.

The third kind of prayer starts through obedience and it consists of the fact that during its time the mind guards the heart and from the heart's deep its demands raise towards the Lord. This type of prayer is the prayer of the spiritual man. But this type of prayer will be possible only if the soul has reached before the consummate dispassion, by rejecting all the affections for the world, and by obeying a spiritual guide he has become accustomed to no longer do his wills but he has modified any of his addiction to the world. The mind of this one it cannot be any longer attracted by devil by any

cunning and towards any thoughts, but it remains free of all things, being able to easily banish away any thought coming in, in order to pray with a clean heart. This is a long lasting beginning of the consummate prayer.

As one can see, even according to this *Method*, one reaches the clean prayer not at once – neither can anybody do it -, by using some physiological methods, as argued in derision the Western theologians, but this is the coronation of some long efforts of purification of passions and thoughts. Only after somebody has achieved a clean conscience towards God, towards people, and towards the world's things, he can use these procedures as some auxiliary means in order to achieve the clean prayer. Therefore these procedures aren't essential, but essential is the permanent state which somebody has achieved. Such a man, anyway, he can easily pray cleanly. So, the one who has reached the dispassion and the cleanness, when he wants from time to time to be elevated to the state of prayer free of any thoughts, he must gather his mind in the deep of his heart and from there he must elevate his prayer towards God. Then he can use in order to gather his mind within his heart also the following auxiliary procedures: "Sitting down in a quiet monastic cell, alone in a corner, do what I am saying to you: close the door and raise your mind from everything that is vain and perishable. Then, lean your chin on your chest and direct your sensitive eyes with the whole your heart towards yourself. And prolong a little also

the inbreathing in order to keep your mind and to focus the place of your heart, where usually are all the soul's powers. Firstly, you will find a thick darkness, impassable. But by persevering and by doing this day and night, you will find a wonder, an untold happiness. This is for immediately the mind finds the heart's place, the mind will see what it has never thought to see before: it sees the air from the heart's darkness and it sees itself as whole, full of discernment power, and, since then, immediately that a thought appears it banishes that thought away and it destroys that thought before crystallizing and taking shape, by calling on Jesus Christ.”⁵

But the *Method* knows even a fourth type of prayer, that one of the spiritual man, when the mind no longer needs such natural auxiliary physiological methods, or such toils, in order to achieve its state of focusing into heart, but it achieves this state at once and it remains steadfastly in contemplation. Only this ends the ladder of the prayer. From here one can see that the recommendations of physiological order are useful only to the ones who haven't accustomed themselves yet to the clean prayer, but they are in the phase of starting to themselves accustom to it. These methods are addressed to the ones who haven't consolidated themselves yet steadfastly

⁵ So is the neo-Greek text from the Greek Philokalia. The detail with the “belly button” it is only in the old-Greek text published by Hausherr and it seems to be interpolated by some adversaries of the hesychasts. (note no. 422 of Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae)

in dispassion.

Going back to the third kind of prayer described by us in the fragment from above, we ascertain that the gathering of the mind within heart with the calling of Jesus Christ, the light seen by the mind reached there and the easily banishing of any thought are elements taken identically from Diadochus of Photice. What is characteristic to the *Method* are the following physiological elements:

a) Directing the look towards chest as parallel to this fact the mind to search for and to find the place of the heart.

b) Compressing the breathing.

For the last detail the *Method* doesn't give any explanation, while other methods offer all the explanations concerning the breathing. That's why it is hard to believe that this *Method* made such a recommendation without presupposing that there were some explanations for it.

These are the considerations for we tend to believe that though this *Method* is attributed to Simeon, though it actually is older than the other methods we know, it still isn't the first method. We can ascertain that there was circulating as tradition a practice with several variants, and there were explanations for all their aspects. The one who recorded this *Method* only presented one of its variants. He wrote it down and he did it rather for his personal use and for the use of some people close to him, and that might be the reason why he didn't specify all the necessary explanations for these ones

were known out of oral tradition.

2) But on the time of the Hesychasm the method enjoying the greatest authority was that of Nicephorus the Monk. That's why even at that time they very seldom spoke about Simeon as author of some method. We think that Simeon's *Method* never enjoyed a considerable authority given the fact that it didn't bring any important specification regarding the breathing.

The *Method* of Nicephorus the Monk it is the second one written according to the oldness. Nicephorus was born around the year 1215 in Italy, and around the year 1260 he went to Athos where he learnt, from the most advanced fathers, the art of the appeasement, and then he became the guide of the younger ones. "To these ones he composed also a collection of Patristic explanations, which strengthens for fight and it shows the ways of wars and the rewards and the crowns of the victory. For he saw that these ones cannot fight the fickleness of the mind, he composed for them also a procedure which they could stop through, the mind's scattering and fantasy" (*Word II Triad II* of Palamas). One of these disciples was a teacher to Palamas. The hesychast movement from Athos it actually started through Nicephorus the Monk, and therefore this procedure was the one most widely practiced. But for Nicephorus at his turned he learnt from others the *craftsmanship of the prayer*, his procedure it actually presents an existing practice. His *Method*, which in

the first part it is a collection of Patristic explanations, and in the second part it actually is a procedure, it was published for the first time in the *Greek Philokalia*, where it was called as: *Word about Taking Vigil and Guarding the Mind*, and from there it has been taken in Migne, G.P., 147, col. 960.

Behold the procedure that, according to Nicephorus “it quickly leads to dispassion and to seeing God”:

“You know that what we breathe is the air, and that we breathe the air not because of something else but because of our heart. This is for the heart is the producer of the life and of the warmth within body. Therefore the heart attracts the breathing in order to eliminate its own warmth and to provide the right temperature to itself. The cause of this *oikonomia*, or better said its tool, it is the lung, which, by having from God a thin fabric, as some sheets, it easily introduces and eliminates the content. Thus, the heart, by attracting through breathing the fresh air and by eliminating the warm air, it preserves unbroken the order which it has been placed for, in order to uphold the organism. Therefore you, by seating and gathering your mind, introduce the mind on the way of your nostrils, where the air goes to the heart through, and force your mind to go together with the air you inhale, to the heart. By entering there, the absence of the joy and the absence of the happiness will come to an end. As a man who, when turning back home from his field work, he no longer knows what to do because of his joy that he has been found worthy

to come back and to meet again his children and his wife, likewise the mind, when united with the soul, it is filled up with pleasure and with untold happiness. So, brother, teach your mind not to easily get out of there. This is because at the beginning the mind always wants to get out of that prison and form the grip of the inward things. You must know also that, while your mind is there, you don't stay in silence and laziness, but you have as object of ceaseless cogitation the words: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me". And if by toiling a lot, you still cannot enter the heart's surroundings, as I told you, do what I am saying to you and with the help from God you will find what you are searching for. You know that the thinking power of each man it is in his chest, for within the chest, even while we do not move our lips, we still are speaking, deciding, making prayers, uttering psalms, and many other things. To this thinking power, while removing any thought from it – for it will be possible to you if you want it – give it the words: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me". And force your mind to shout out these words within yourself, instead of any other thought. By doing this for some time, the entrance of your heart will open to you too, as I have written to you, without any doubt. We know this out of experience. And there will come to you in the same time with the desire and with the pleasant taking-heed, the whole group of the virtues: the love, the joy, the peace, and the other ones".

As we can see in this “Word” we do not have only a method, but we have two methods: one that recommend from the beginning to be searched for the place of the heart and to be sent the mind there in the same time with the breathing, and a method that recommends, in order to achieve the same goal, the simple but persistent uttering of the prayer addressed to Jesus. The second method doesn’t differ from the method attributed to Saint John Chrysostom, and this is a proof for the fact that the physiological procedures weren’t reckoned as essentially necessary. And the first *Method* doesn’t say anything about the body’s posture and about where to look with our eyes, but it only explains the reason why the breathing must be organized, and this shows that this *Method* is either only an explanation of a recommendation left unexplained in the *Method* of Saint Simeon the New Theologian, or that it was supposed to be known as an existent practice. Better said, the observation that the thinking power is located in the chest and that it must utter where it is the prayer of Jesus, would justify us to accept that Nicephorus the Monk presupposes some turning of the look towards the chest.

Anyway, in the *Method* of Nicephorus the sole physiological element, somehow strangely, it is that of the breathing. Nicephorus explains in the first place the role of the breathing: that one of keeping a moderate temperature for the heart. In organism there is a burning process that produces

certain warmth. This warmth is felt especially by the heart. The air we breathe it has the purpose of lowering this temperature. It is actually a common knowledge that we inhale taking in cold air and we exhale eliminating warm air. This can maintain a calm state and therefore it can prolong the prayer.

But the *Method* of Nicephorus it stops here with the explanations, by not drawing out of them the practical conclusions, namely it doesn't show that out of the mentioned premises it turns out a necessity of having a regulated breathing for, by keeping within body a normal temperature and a natural mood, these ones to positively influence the soul's life and to be possible to prolong the prayer for a long time. For instance, we know that an accelerated breathing, namely by not receiving enough cold air (air rich in oxygen) and by not sufficiently eliminating the warm air (loaded with carbon dioxide) it increases the warmth within body and this brings a state of disquietude. The man who breathes too quickly he cannot think peacefully. Also, when the man is grabbed by passion, he breathes quickly, gasping for air, because of not taking enough oxygen and not eliminating enough carbon dioxide. Dominating a passion can be obtained by appeasing the way we breathe in, this being a proof of the interdependency between body and soul. By and large, we know that the quietude and the self-control are intertwined with "cold blood", with a moderate temperature,

	<p>and with a calm breathing. The full stomach, for instance, it warms up the blood, while the hunger keeps the blood cold. Nicephorus didn't use scientific terms as burning process, oxygen, or carbon dioxide, which the chemistry brought up later. But his observations constitute a precise recording of the process, in its empirical side, and therefore they present, in their own way, a scientific truth.</p> <p>For Nicephorus didn't bring the explanations to an end, but he stopped before drawing a conclusion, we can say that his <i>Method</i> doesn't present all the reasons which stood at the basis of these procedures which surely were known to many, or, anyway, the initiators of this practice knew them. From here one can see also that Nicephorus' <i>Method</i> is based not only on that one of Simeon, but it was based on a practice existing at that time, as in case of the second <i>Method</i> too. From this point of view the <i>Method</i> of Simeon can be regarded as more complete for, though doesn't give any explanation, it recommend a holding of the breathing, whilst the <i>Method</i> of Nicephorus gives explanation, but it doesn't draw out of them the conclusion of the practical recommendation of holding the breathing. In the <i>Method</i> of Simeon is said though: "Compress your air breathing, in order not to breathe easily". (Stăniloae 1992: 217-223)</p>	
224	<p>"At a first glance it would seem that there is a contradiction in the two <i>Method</i> of Nicephorus the Monk and of Saint Simeon the New Theologian. This is because on one hand they reckon</p>	Prayer

	<p>that an accelerated breathing disturbs the inner state by the fact that it doesn't absorb and it doesn't eliminate enough air, and therefore they recommend the breathing to be done satisfactorily. On the other hand they recommend the breathing to be compressed in order one to not breathe easily, a fact that would mean also insufficiently receiving and eliminating of air, leading to an accelerate breathing. But we ascertain that compressing our inhaling and exhaling it doesn't mean a diminution of the receive and eliminated air, but only extending these phases, namely doing them more rarely but also more profoundly. The air is taken in and is eliminated more gradually, and not at once, but just because of that one takes the air in and he eliminates it more fully. Only by this compression the process of breathing is fully accomplished and the body's temperature and mood are preserved, and therefore the mood of the soul is preserved too as normal and steadfast. Besides these, this unfolding of the breathing process keeps in a peaceful state the whole organism, and the mind can focus in an undisturbed manner on its meditation." (Stăniloae 1992: 224)</p>	
224-225	<p>"Nicephorus the Monk, despite the fact that he started from explanations, he stops explaining before drawing the conclusions, and he passes to another idea related to the breathing, better said he shows himself preoccupied with drawing another conclusion regarding the rhythmical character of the breathing. So, after he has showed that the</p>	Prayer

purpose of the breathing is to keep a “appropriate temperature” in organism, he continues: “You, therefore, by seating and by gathering your mind, introduce your mind on the way of your nostrils where the air goes to the heart on, and push your mind and force your mind to go, together with the inhaled air, to the heart”. It isn’t about the mind’s being, as Palamas explained, but it is about the mind’s work, namely it is about cogitation or attention. Through this recommendation the attention is stopped from directing towards the things from outside and it is turned inwardly. Of course the attention isn’t something physical in order to be possible to send the attention together with the air to the heart. But it isn’t less true that the attention can follow a physical movement. Here is recommended that the attention to follow the movement of the air to the heart. But because we do not feel the air’s movement after it passed through lungs, the road forwards, to the heart, it must be done by our attention accompanying our imagination. But they mustn’t stop either at the physical heart, but they must cross beyond, to the spiritual heart, by exceeding everything. Actually, this is what it is intended: that the cogitation to turn upon itself renouncing to any defined object. And because the cogitation cannot notice itself, the cogitation is given as preoccupation, after it has withdrawn from everything, the thought at Jesus Christ. Following the line of the inhaling it is an auxiliary means for this withdrawal of the attention from things, for the

turning of the cogitation upon itself.

The imagination plays a great role here. Feeling the course which the air goes towards heart on, attracting our attention upon itself, it makes us imagining how, in parallel to it, our cogitation too it goes inwardly; it actually goes. But it doesn't go on a material road and it doesn't stop at the material heart. This material road watched attentively it is an occasion that eases and simplifies the movement the cogitation makes when turned upon itself, like leaning the forehead against out hand it is an occasion that eases our focusing upon one thing. The inhaling must take a long time, for in parallel to it there goes also the cogitation towards interior, until there's nothing left except the cogitation itself with the thought at Jesus. And this act must last, in order to become accustomed to go there and to stay there. Of course, retaining the mind within heart for a longer time it is no longer accomplished only by prolonging the inhaling, but also by delaying the exhaling. But this recommendation it wasn't done more aprioristically by Nicephorus the Monk. But it was done by Gregory of Sinai, in his *Method*, which, on one hand, it takes this recommendation from the *Method* of Simeon of the New Theologian, of holding the inhaling, and on the other hand it draws the necessary conclusion of breathing more rarely, and it shows also what this is necessary for in order the mind to remain longer within heart. If Nicephorus shows what one can push his mind like, towards his heart, Gregory of Sinai shows

	how by exhaling more rarely the mind can be hold within heart.” (Stăniloae 1992: 224-225)	
226	<p>Behold the <i>Method</i> of Gregory of Sinai for using the <i>Heart’s Prayer</i>:</p> <p>“By seating since morning to evening on a stool approximately ten centimeters wide, gather your mind out of rationality, into your heart, and keep it there. Bend with toil your chest, your shoulders, and your neck, in order to feel a great pain and perseveringly shout out with your mind or with your soul: “Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me”. Then, by moving your thought at the other half, say: “Son of God, have mercy on me”. And by uttering for many time this half, do not change the halves easily and continuously. This is because the plants replanted often they do not make roots. Retain your breathing’s movement in order not to breathe easily. This is because of the breeze of the air coming out from the heart it darkens the mind and it kidnaps the cogitation, taking the mind away from there and giving the mind prisoner to the forgetfulness, or making the mind to cross from a thought to another, and then ending without realizing in the inappropriate things. And when you will see the filthiness of the evil ghosts, or of the thoughts, appearing or being imagined in your mind, have no fear; even if clean images of the things will appear to you do not pay attention to them, but, but keeping your breathing as long as you can, and by locking up your mind into your heart, and by continuously</p>	Prayer

	and perseveringly invoking the name of Jesus Christ, you burn them down quickly and destroy them, by defeating them with the godlike name. This is for John Climacus says: Defeat the enemies with the name of Jesus, for there is no more powerful weapon in heavens and on earth". (Stăniloae 1992: 226)	
227	<p>"In what concerns the uttering of the Heart's Prayer: "some people, says Gregory of Sinai, they recommend to be uttered with the mouth, other with the mind. I recommend both ways, for sometimes the mind cannot utter the prayer because of being overwhelmed with worries, and some other times the mouth cannot utter the prayer. That's why you must pray with both your mouth and your mind. But in order to do that you must live in quietude and not agitated, lest the voice by disturbing the feeling and the mind's attention to impede them. This will be, until the mind by getting accustomed to this work, it will advance and it will receive power from the Ghost in order to be able to pray wholly and perseveringly. Then you won't need to speak with your mouth, but it won't be possible too; then it will be enough to commit the work with your mind".</p> <p>This would be what the <i>Method</i> of Simeon the New Theologian calls it as the fourth degree of the prayer. The rule of the breathing is only a means partially helping to the mind's turning towards itself. The mind is steadfastly turned towards itself by the godlike Ghost, Who work can be felt after we have</p>	Prayer

	<p>been striving ourselves for achieving the clean prayer. “Nobody will be able, says Gregory of Sinai, to keep the mind by himself, if the Ghost doesn’t keep it. This is because by transgressing the commandments, the mind slipping from there and getting separated from God, it is carries away everywhere like a prisoner. Restrain your mind and hold your breathing, by clenching your mouth, but only partially, and then it gets again scattered away. But when the work of the prayer comes, then it truly keeps the mind with itself and it fills the mind with joy and it sets the mind free from slavery”. (Stăniloae 1992: 227)</p>	
227	<p>“One must retain his breathing, according to Gregory of Sinai, for delaying the quick or sudden getting out of the air from heart, a fact that causes a darkening of the mind, or a getting out of the mind from within. Actually, a quick and noisy breathing, on one hand it doesn’t give the cogitation time to gradually focus upon the interior, and on the other hand it draws the attention upon it, getting the attention out. That’s why is good that both the inhaling and the exhaling to be done long and without making noises. If the one who prays accustoms himself to this quiet and rare rhythm of the breathing, the breathing no longer bothers him, but it serves him only for focusing his mind inwardly. That one forgets about breathing, though its breathing helps him focusing.” (Stăniloae 1992: 227)</p>	Prayer
228	<p>“Gregory of Sinai if the first to tell us that the short prayer</p>	Prayer

	addressed to Jesus it must be divided in two parts, and each half must be uttered for a long time. Actually, if one says the prayer wholly for each time, he will force the attention to take heed to too many words and the mind won't be able to focus." (Stăniloae 1992: 228)	
228	"Saint Gregory Palamas while defending in his writing the ones who use auxiliary means for praying, he doesn't reckon these auxiliary means as absolutely necessary but only useful in some measure to the beginners. And that's why not all the Holy Fathers recommend these auxiliary means of prayer." (Stăniloae 1992: 228)	Prayer
228	"In the writing of Kallistos and Ignatius are given new specifications upon the way which one must achieve the gathering of the mind in his heart, and to reach his whole mind's focusing in the Heart's Prayer. By and large, the writing presents the <i>Method</i> of Nicephorus, but it is no stranger to those of Simeon the New Theologian and Gregory of Sinai, for it recommend the seating on a narrow stool (Gregory of Sinai) and in a corner of the room (Simeon the New Theologian)." (Stăniloae 1992: 228)	
229	"The specifications brought by Kallistos and Ignatius are these ones: "After the sun has set, by calling the almighty Lord, Jesus Christ, to help you, seat down on a little stool, in a quiet monastic cell, not lightened. And by gathering your mind from the usual outwardly roving, and by peacefully pushing your	Prayer

mind inwardly by inhaling the air, keep the prayer of “Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me”, namely introducing somehow, in the same time with the breathing, in a unitary mode, the prayer’s words too”. They recommend that, in the same time with cogitating at these words, one must cogitate also at death, at judgment, at the reward for the good deeds, and to the punishment for the evil deeds; and the one who prays to reckon about himself that he is the most sinful amongst people and even more unclean than the devils. Thus, by cogitating at the eternal torments which we will endure, the one who prays starts feeling his heart pricked and he starts shedding tears. If the tears still do not come, let him persevere until they will. This is for the tears wash away the passions and the defilements. “And if the tears do not come to you, seat and pay attention to such cogitations interwoven with the prayer, for an hour. Then, by getting yourself up, sing attentively the religious service after dinner. And the, by seating again, keep the prayer with the whole your power, cleanly and in a non-scattered manner, namely without worrying and without any thought and hallucinations, with much taking vigil, for a half an hour” (*Greek Philokalia*, Second Edition, volume II, p. 365).

They recommend the same for morning, namely one to focus for an hour upon clean prayer, and then to do a song prayer, and then for another half an hour to do the clean prayer. (Stăniloae 1992: 229)

229	<p>“By and large, the monk must pray ceaselessly. “It is better for him to choose death, than to remain without prayer even for a moment”, because “is dead the soul that doesn’t move towards prayer” and “the one who prays he is dialoguing with God” (<i>Greek Philokalia</i>, Second Edition, volume II, p. 367). But the mind cannot whenever focus in clean prayer, a prayer lacking any thought, to which serve the as auxiliary and preparatory means recommendations from the <i>Methods</i> for uttering the Heart’s Prayer.” (Stăniloae 1992: 229)</p>	Prayer
229-230	<p>“One mustn’t wait until he will be consolidated in dispassion in order to try to focus in the clean prayer. The progress in dispassion and the progress in the clean prayer they both take place simultaneously. At the beginning, one can achieve with great toils a few moments of clean prayer and immediately there occur thoughts which he must fight against. “But the one who has reached the measure of the spiritual age he is imparted with the clean and not-scattered prayer from within heart, with the godlike love, and thus he becomes consummate and steadfast in the spiritual prayer and he is made partaker to the unmediated ecstasy and to the kidnapping in awe and to the union with the desired One due to the perfect love”.” (Stăniloae 1992: 229-230)</p>	Prayer
230	<p>“The recommendations of the <i>Methods</i> for praying, with the difficulties which they describe, are addressed mostly to the ones who are at the beginning of the efforts for achieving the clean prayer, namely to the ones who haven’t reached yet a</p>	Prayer

	<p>full dispassion. Only to the beginners is recommended also the uttering of all the words of the <i>Heart's Prayer</i>. The progressed ones remain only to utter the name of Jesus, and the progressed ones remain to ceaselessly remembering the name of Jesus in their mind. While everybody is urged to often call Jesus, or to utter the <i>Heart's Prayer</i>, only the consummate ones reach the state of perpetual clean prayer.” (Stăniloae 1992: 230)</p>	
230-233	<p>“More detailed explanations regarding the old physiological recommendations, which actually can be reduced to turning our look toward our chest and to breathing rarely, we are given by Nicodemus the Hagiorite, the learned churchly writer from the XVIII Century.</p> <p>Concerning the first aspect Nicodemus said: “You know that any work had a natural relation with the being and with the power which sets it in function and it naturally turns towards those and it unites with them. So, when the mind’s work is liberated from any world’s exterior things, by guarding the senses and the imagination, it must be brought back to its being and power, in other words the mind must be made to enter the heart, which is the organ of the mind’s being and power. This turning of the mind, the beginners must accustom themselves to do it..., by leaning down their head and by leaning their chin against the upper part of their chest”. By turning the mind upon itself, the mind becomes one and by itself it ascends to the cogitation at God. By</p>	Prayer

entering the heart, the mind mustn't be allowed to do anything, but the mind must be given, towards cogitation, the *Heart's Prayer*.

But Nicodemus didn't simply repeat the idea of Diadochus, but he gives the idea some explanations:

"After the mind has entered the heart, the mind must no longer contemplate, the mind must do nothing more, but by finding the interior rationality which we are reasoning and composing works of art with, let's judge on ourselves and let's examine on ourselves, and we read books in silence without the mouth to speak out..., not to allow it to say anything else except this short prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me".

But this isn't enough. One must also put in movement the soul's power of will, in other words, one must say this prayer with the whole his will, power, and love. I want to explain this more clearly: the internal rationality must pay attention, both with its mental sight and with its mental hearing, not only to the works of this prayer but even more to the things this prayer signifies, and it must do that by remaining limitless, without images, without representations, without cogitating to something else, neither sensitive nor intelligible, neither from inside or from outside, even be it a good thing. This is because god is outside all of these, so that the mind when trying to unite itself with God in prayer, it must get out of all existing things, either sensitive or intelligible, and to ascend

above all things, in order to obtain the godlike union. As about will, it must be attached wholly to the words of the prayer, so that the mind, the rationality, and the will, these three parts of the soul to be one and The One to be threefold. For this is the way which the man, being the image of the Holy Trinity, he is attached and he is united with his prototype. So said the great hero and master of the prayer and of the mind's watchfulness, namely the great Gregory Palamas: "When the mind's unity becomes trinity while remaining in unity, then it is united with the Trinitarian monad of the godhead, by closing the gate to any deviation and by keeping itself above the body and above the world and above the master of this world."

Therefore, Nicodemus the Hagiorite, by starting from the turning of the look towards the chest, which is to the beginners a means making them easier to detach they cogitation from the external things and to focus the cogitation upon itself, upon the own indefinite, it find the occasion to show how the road towards contemplating God crosses through the liberation of the mind from the narrowing accommodated to the finite objects and through finding out the own indefinite. So, the focusing towards this infinite it is in the same time a focusing of all faculties towards the godlike infinite. This unification of the mind in its indefinite it isn't done at once, but through a previous setting in work on this purpose of all the mental faculties: the mind itself, the

rationality, and the will. The mind would be the general supra-looking of the understanding work, the rationality would be the discursive cogitation highlighting each element of the cogitated whole and it establishes the reports amongst them, and the will is the loving directing of this cogitated whole towards Jesus. Therefore, at the beginning it isn't enough only a indistinct meditation upon the prayer's words, but it is necessary to highlight all the meanings comprised in the prayer, which are existential meanings awakening the will's loving attachment of the to Christ. From this both rational and existential analysis, of all the meanings comprised in this prayer, we are elevated to an embracing and unitary contemplation of the content of this prayer, directed towards Christ with the whole our love.

Actually, the unified mind which Nicodemus the Hagiorite wants us to ascent to, in order us to see God through that unified mind, by not being a state of motionless abstraction, it isn't else but our mind ardent due to its love for God and aware of its own sinfulness. Towards this state want us to be elevated Kallistos and Ignatius and Kallistos the Katafygiote, another author from Philokalia. And the sign that we have reached there it is the abundant tears.

To this mind's focusing too, it must serve also the keeping of the breathing during the prayer. Here, Nicodemus the Hagiorite brought, in addition to the previous explanations, also a specification which we haven't met it before: the

breathing mustn't be done in a perfect continuation like our nature has been previously accustomed to, but the breathing must be retained for a little until the internal rationality says the whole prayer, crossing with its meditation, of course, to all the prayer's words. For a total interruption of the breathing process cannot take place, especially between inhaling and exhaling, when it seems that Nicodemus the Hagiorite would want to place the uttering of the prayer, we believe that it still is about prolonging the inhaling a little over than usual. His specification consists of the fact that the words' uttering it is attached to inhaling and not to exhaling, for, according to the old methods of praying, through inhaling the cogitation is turned towards interior. During the exhaling it is better to be silent, in order to be possible to retain the cogitation inside, and in order not to be its attention kidnapped by the flow of the air.

This retaining of prolonging of the inhaling a little over than usual it causes also some kind of discomfort, of pain, of sufferance to the heart, said Nicodemus the Hagiorite, which on one hand makes our heart humble, it make is thinner, and it breaks it, so that it banishes out of it the poison of the pleasure, and on the other hand it makes our heart to attract towards itself the attention of the mental powers. Therefore the retaining of the breathing, in addition to the fact that it prolongs the mind's focusing act inwardly, it produces that existential state too, of humbleness and crushing to tears,

	<p>which the mind must gain it to itself, by gathering itself whole before the unseen Christ, but Who is felt as present.</p> <p>About this bodily pain must speak even Palamas, in order to show its use, against Barlaam; Barlaam conceived the state of prayer as a state of pure comfortable intellectuality, unlike the Easter Fathers who conceived it as intertwined with existential elements of gentleness, of humbleness, of tears, of felt physical pain and in the same time of joy overflowing from the soul's deep. Only in ecstasy, on the supreme level of the prayer, of even beyond that level, it ceases any bodily feeling.” (Stăniloae 1992: 230-233)</p>	
233-236	<p>“Almost all the authors who wrote about the <i>Prayer Method</i> knew, beside the more complicated method of retaining the breathing and of turning the look towards chest, also a simple method consisting of simply but increasingly often uttering the words; “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me the sinner”. This consists of, the method attributed to Saint John Chrysostom and another method attributed to Saint Simeon the New Theologians and to Nicephorus the Monk. The last one establishes also the reports between this simpler method and the complicated method: the one who cannot start with the complicated method, let him start with simply and increasingly often uttering the Heart's Prayer.</p> <p>This simpler method was practiced during the XIX Century in Russia not only by monks, but also by the so-called pilgrims, or pious people who, by renouncing to everything, they were</p>	Prayer

walking all over Russia spreading the word of God; this simpler prayer method was practiced even by the people living a common life in society. This spreading of the Heart's Prayer amongst the large social classes of the Russian believers, it is described under the form of pilgrim confessions, by one who was practicing it, in a little book entitles: *The Confessions of a Pilgrim towards His Spiritual Guide*. The author wanted to remain anonymous. The book was printed in Kazan in the year 1883, by the abbot of Saint Michael Monastery; he copied the book after a manuscript found by him on Athos Mountain. The story seems to be connected with the époque of the Crimean war, and to the liberation of the slaves, namely the period between the years 1856-1860.

According to this little book, the whole development of the spiritual life from its beginning to the highest levels, it is being done on the thread of the Heart's Prayer. The spiritual life starts with orally uttering the Heart's Prayer for short periods of time, being deepened and being purified on the measure it is being uttered more often, more interiorized, and more by itself.

In the Russian Pilgrim's stories the Heart's Prayer crosses through three stages. The first stage is that of simply uttering it, at the beginning for three thousand times, and then for six thousand times, and then for twelve thousand times, and finally: all the time. After a while, its practitioner can pass to the method attributed to Simeon the New Theologian, by

searching with his imagination for the place of his heart and by regulating his breathing, in order to synchronize the prayer's words to the heart's beatings and to the breathing rhythm. But he still hasn't reached the mental prayer. One reaches this prayer when the mind prays by itself, totally without words, as a permanent movement of the mind, parallel to the heart's beatings. If the two stages are usually called the Heart's Prayer, the third stage is called as the mental prayer or the clean prayer. Consequently, the Heart's Prayer gradually becomes mental prayer, though the content of the mental prayer it still is Jesus.

The synchronization obtains in the second stage it constitutes an explanation brought to the old methods, though it isn't excluded that it existed in the old practices too, even if the old methods do not mention it specifically. The synchronization to the heart's beatings consists of an uttering or of thinking at each prayer's word on a heart's beating. This can be done after the practitioner of the Heart's Prayer becomes accustomed to represent his heart's place and to hear his heart's beatings. Behold what the Russian pilgrim initiates a blind man in this synchronization like: "After I read to him from Philokalia the necessary things, he started begging me to show him what he can find his heart with his mind like, and what can he introduce the godlike name of Jesus Christ in his heart like. So I started to explain him: "Behold, you cannot see anything now, but you can imagine and you can represent

with your mind the things you were seeing before, for instance a man of a certain thing, or one of your limbs as there would be your hand or your leg, and you can represent it so vividly like you would see it in a material manner in front of you. Can you direct, in this way, your eyes, even if they are blind, towards that limb of yours?”- “Yes, I can.” Answered the blind man. “Then, you represent exactly like that, your heart, and direct your eyes towards there, like you would cross through your chest with your sight, and represent your heart to yourself as vividly as you can, but also listen carefully with your ear too, as your heart moves and as it beats on each time. If you have focused yourself in this, start uttering on each heart’s beating, while looking at your heart, the prayer’s words. On the first beating say or cogitate at the word “Lord, on the second one “Jesus”, on the third one “Christ, on the fourth one “Have mercy”, and on the fifth one “on me”, and repeat these as long as you can” (pp. 149-150). After getting accustomed to this synchronization, one starts doing the synchronization with the breathing too. This one take place in another mode: during inhaling it is uttered the first half of the prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ”, and during exhaling, the second half: “have mercy on me”. This synchronization cannot be achieved except by prolonging the breathing, so that the duration of the inhaling to correspond to at least three heart beatings, while the first words of the prayer are uttered. After certain practice, the

practitioner so totally unites his breathing and his heart's beatings with the word of the *Heart's Prayer*, or with the thought at these words, so that there is no longer heart beating or breathing not to be intertwined with the prayer's words. The prayer becomes a breathing of the life, of the soul. If this synchronization consisted only in getting accustomed to uttering the prayer's words simultaneously to the heart and to the breathing, it could become something mechanical. But the main accent is not on words but on thinking at each word until, in the phase of the mental prayer the uttering ceases and there remains only their meaning's repetition with the thought. This repetition with the understanding it becomes an uninterrupted habit. Parallel to the body's breathing it takes place as another breathing the uninterrupted thinking at Jesus, intertwined with feeling the heart. Then "the name of the Lord it has been seeded within heart" as says the *Method* attributed to Saint John Chrysostom, or "the heart has swallowed the Lord and the Lord the heart, so that both of them have become one" and the heart cannot beat without the mind to cogitate at the Lord, like the eye cannot look at a thing without the mind seeing that thing. "And finally, after about five months, I felt that the prayer unfold within me without any constraint from my part, and it was being performed by the mind and by the heart not only in the state of watchfulness but even during my sleep it was being done likewise, and the prayer it was no longer interrupted by

anything, not even for a moment, no matter what I was doing". So, only the mental prayer it is truly an uninterrupted prayer. "Nothing was impeded by this prayer and nothing was bothering this prayer. If I have something to do and the prayer unveils within my heart by itself, that thing will go quicker; if I listen to something or if I read something, the prayer won't stop and I feel in the same time both of them, as I would have been divided in two or I would have two souls in my chest".

This prayer's effects are astonishing: "After some three weeks, I started feeling a pain in my heart, then warmth, a peace, and a very pleasant quietude. Sometimes I felt like a trembling in my heart. My heart was so light, to free, and so comforted. Sometimes I felt a fiery love for Jesus Christ and for the entire creation of God. Sometimes started flowing from my eyes, by themselves, tears of gratitude to God, Who shared to me – to the sinner - such a gift. Sometimes my so cumbersome understanding was illuminated, so that I easily comprised things I couldn't even have thought at before... I was experiencing an illumination of my rationality, a penetration into Scripture, and an understanding of the ghost of the creation". "When I started to pray with my heart all the surroundings appeared to me in a charming form: the trees, the grass, the birds, the air, the light, all of them seemed to me as talking to me, and That they were here for I was a human being, that they were confessing the God's love for

	man and that everything was praying, that everything was praising God. Then I understood what means the word from Philokalia: “understanding the ghost of the creatures”. And I saw the way one should go on, in order to reach to dialogue with the God’s creatures”. (Stăniloae 1992: 233-236)	
236-237	<p>“Summarizing the aspects related to the methods for easing the mind’s focusing while doing the Heart’s Prayer, we will say that:</p> <p>a) These methods aren’t regarded as absolutely necessary, but they only are auxiliary means to the ones accustomed to gather their mind within themselves and to uninterruptedly utter the words of the Heart’s Prayer. The one who tries to ceaselessly used this prayer he ascertains that without at least focusing his attention on breathing, he won’t be able to focus much either on uttering the prayer, or, in any case, he will need to make a greater effort with his attention. The breathing with its permanent unfolding by itself, it is a supporting string in order to focus the attention. If we use to associate the uttering of the Heart’s Prayer with the breathing, it will be much easier to us to keep this prayer permanently.</p> <p>b) But until one tries these methods, he must be accustomed to utter in a simpler and more non-systematic, but increasingly often and with his thought focused, either the whole Heart’s Prayer or at least one or two words of this prayer (Jesus!, Lord Jesus!, Lord Jesus Christ!, Jesus, have</p>	Prayer

	<p>mercy on me!). In the same time he should have been progressed in liberating himself of passions and of worries.</p> <p>c) Neither are we on the highest levels of the spiritual life on the moment which we start applying the recommendations of these methods, so we are, in a certain regard, as beginners while applying these recommendations and while we cross through diverse phases. In the beginning we can apply but one or two of these recommendations. Some people will remain the whole their live at this much. Others, in time, they will apply all of these recommendations.</p> <p>d) The prayer from these phases it still isn't the mental prayer, but it is the Heart's Prayer. The Heart's Prayer will become mental prayer when the words are no longer needed, neither are the methods, but the mind is occupies ceaselessly together with the heart, with Jesus Christ." (Stăniloae 1992: 236-237)</p>	
9. Towards Jesus, through Our Deep		
237	<p>"If in the negative theology we make abstraction of the world only through rationality and neither is this total, for by denying an attribute to God we think at what we deny, in the mental prayer which we turn ourselves away from everything through, and which we sink in ourselves through, we make an existential abstraction through everything we are, and that is about a total and lasting abstraction. In the prayer which the mind does it within heart, we no longer deny the world and think at the world in the same time, but we simply totally</p>	Prayer

	forget about world with the whole our being. We are the only ones left, and namely not us the ones from surface, but our self from deep, undefined, non-narrowed by thinking at things, our self that cannot be looked or defined by any concept, so that we remain only with the simple awareness of our self's presence, of our indefinable reality." (Stăniloae 1992: 237)	
237-238	<p>"The heart which the mind gathers within, it is not so much the flesh heart, but it is the central headquarters of the mind, the man's center, the man's ghost, the man's subject, the total man from inside, not only the intellectual man but also the sentimental man. These are the man's inner chambers "where there are no longer winds of the evil thoughts", it is the chamber from inside the iconostasis where our Lord Jesus Christ has been dwelling since our Baptism.</p> <p>There we are striving to go with our cogitation through prayer, and that place has no delimitation but it opens infinite perspectives; that's why we must strive to ever deeply penetrate there, ever more inwardly. And this is done by our cogitation by leaving all the sensitive images, all the defined concepts, and all the imaginings. "In prayer, said Saint Gregory Palamas, The mind gradually rejects the relations with the existing things, firstly the relations connecting the mind to the reproachable things, to the evil things, and to the corruptible things, and then it reject the things from the middle (the creation by and large, which stays in the middle</p>	Prayer

	<p>between mind and God, Dumitru Stăniloae's note), being an advice from the Fathers not to accept the knowledge which the enemy makes it to appear while we pray, in order us not to be robbed of what is higher. Therefore the mind, by gradually rejecting these relations, as also the relations with the higher things, it wholly gets out of all the existing things, during the clean prayer. This getting out it is much more higher than the theology by negation" (<i>Word III, Triad III, The Romanian Philokalia</i>, volume VII, p. 309-310)." (Stăniloae 1992: 237-238)</p>	
238	<p>"The Holy Fathers said that surpassing all the sensitive and intelligible things it is a sine qua non condition for the mind to get closer to the infinite God. For instance, in a scholium at Saint Maximos the Confessor they said: "The sensitive things and the intelligible things are in the middle between God and people. By ascending above them, the mind gets closer to God non-enslaved by the sensitive thing to activity and unimpeded by the intelligible thing in contemplation". But this surpassing is much more fully achieved in prayer than in the negative theology. We know that the mind cannot stay either for an instant without being preoccupied with something, namely without a content. The difficult problem is how it is possible having in the same time a content and still leaving everything that is define and that it defines the mind, namely everything that is imprinting of the sensitive and intelligible world? The negative theology denies this content while still</p>	Prayer

	<p>imagining it and thinking at it, alike the smoker is discontent with the tobacco but he still is smoking it. The prayer is the only one succeeding in fully achieving this, by the fact that it removed from within mind any defined content but it gives the mind the preoccupation with the infinite, with God, namely it feels the mind up, positively and experimentally with the apophatic.” (Stăniloae 1992: 238)</p>	
239	<p>“The Holy Fathers discern between mind (νοῦς) and rationality (λόγος). The rationality is the faculty cogitating at the things and comprising them in diverse concepts, at their turn called as rationalities (λόγοι) for the fact that they can be the cogitation’s object. The mind is the faculty cogitating at contents without delimitating them in concepts. The rationality emanates out of the mind, like the divine Logos is always being born out of the Father, Who is the prime Mind (νοῦς). Therefore, like the divine mind is the principle of all things, likewise the mind from within man it is the ultimate principle of all things from within him, and therefore of the rationality too. The mind is therefore the basis of the human subject, who is beyond all the delimited contents, beyond the rationality catching them in concepts. The mind is the undefined basis of the subject who uses his rationality too. The mind cannot be noticed by the rationality through any concept, because of being beyond rationality and beyond any concept. We must leave all concepts and we must ascend above the rationality that forms concepts, in order to notice</p>	Mind / Rationality

	the indefinable basis of our subject. Only the mind can cogitates at itself, but the mind must remove the things and the concepts, which, through the mind's determinative (rational) cogitation have been placed between mind and the mind's cogitation at itself. While the mind sees itself as in a mirror (in order not to be doubled), the images and the concepts, on the opposite, they will cover this mirror like with a wall that must be crossed through with much toil, in order to penetrate within heart, or within the own being." (Stăniloae 1992: 239)	
239	"Saint Maximos the Confessor called at his turn the mind as <i>subject</i> , and he called the acts starting from the mind as <i>accidents</i> (G.P. 90, 332). And N. Lossky says: "By being the most personal part of the man, the constitutive principle of the human nature and of the freedom, the mind (vous) it corresponds the most in the human nature to the person. One can say that the mind is the headquarters of the person, of the human hypostasis, containing in it the nature's ensemble: ghost, soul, and body" (quoted work, p. 198)." (Stăniloae 1992: 239)	Mind / Rationality
239-240	"Both out of the human mind's character, as image of the divine Mind, and out of the object's definition as realities cogitated by the mind, it comes that God too is Subject, namely Subject in the highest meaning of the word. This is for by ascertaining us the things, though they are objects to us they still aren't totally such – in the sense that we neither	Mind / Rationality

	<p>fully know all of them nor we created them by knowing them, and they cannot exist by themselves since they do not exist for themselves – we deduce that there must be a supreme Subject Who the things depend absolutely on, and He know the thing and He creates the things, and the things are by no means take out from under His power. This Subject, Who has all the God’s attributes, He is the only one existing absolutely by Himself, and He is the sole basis (substance) in the full meaning of the word, while all the others are created and are phenomena and accidents in report with Him.” (Stăniloae 1992: 239-240)</p>	
240	<p>“Being God a Subject, in order us to ascend to understand Him, we need to leave all the objects and, by surrendering Him our subject, to come somewhat closer to understand Him. Everything that can be defined in the frame of the cogitation, it has an object character, given that no subject (either ours or belonging to our fellow humans) it cannot be comprised in a defined concept.” (Stăniloae 1992: 240)</p>	Knowledge
240	<p>“God isn’t according to the likeness of the things, of the concepts, or what can be content of the cogitation, of the objects by and large, which do not stand by themselves and for themselves. This is for all of these are, by their nature, inferior to cogitation, subordinate to the cogitation and to the subject cogitating at them and God cannot be subordinate to any power or work of all the existing ones. For our cogitating subject is the highest sovereign who we meet in the world, by</p>	Knowledge

	<p>ascending above all the object's order and by avoiding any attempt to be grabbed by something, he is the sole entity who somehow has resemblance to God. So, in order us to somewhat ascend towards understanding God, we must understand first the subjects who cogitates within the created world. Actually, there cannot be about understanding in the usual meaning of "comprising", because only the object can be comprised. That's why we rather meet him than knowing him, and he remains uncaptured, sovereign, free, and indefinable, in front ops us. This is when it comes about our fellow human's subject. But something somewhat similar happen also when it comes about our subject: our subject unveils and live on itself, it meets himself face to face like in a mirror, he runs into himself. When our subject comes across himself, he forgets about all things, better said, in order our subject to find himself he must forget about all things. The external things and the content of the cogitation, shortly speaking: the things, they stop the subject from turning towards himself. Only with great efforts, after long exercises, the subject reaches capable of detaching himself for several consecutive moments from the contents' slavery, which keep him away from home, and they narrow him according to their own limits." (Stăniloae 1992: 240)</p>	
241	<p>"This turning of the subject upon himself it is a road leading closer to God than the affirmative or the negative theology, which are ways of the rationality using positively and</p>	Knowledge

	<p>negatively the things and the defined concepts. In this turning of the thinking subject upon himself, we have on one hand a fuller removal of the things and of the thinkable contents, but on the other hand the meeting of the subject with himself it unveils a positive given of a incomparable greater that all the removed objects constituting the point on which the rational act of denying everything it changes its structure, by becoming a feeling of a positive experiencing the deep reality of the own subject. But this reality isn't unveiled to us by itself, but it reveals to us, in a more intense and in a more obvious mode than the objects' world, the divine reality itself. This is for the indefinite depth and the subject's sovereignty do not allow to be caught in concepts, but, in a more adequate mode than the objects, they are transparent to God. The subject's indefinite that we still feel that isn't the attributed of the infinite, because of being there so many realities not depending on it, it allows us to intuit the divine infinity. The infinite cannot have his basis except on the divine infinity. And we feel somehow this basis like we feel the subject as basis of the body. The subject's sovereignty which we still feel about that it isn't an almightiness, it allows us realize the presence of an absolute sovereignty. The amazement the mystery of the subject causes to us it becomes amazement about the much greater mystery of the absolute Subject." (Stăniloae 1992: 241)</p>	
241	"The Holy Fathers affirmed that the mind reaching to look at	Knowledge

	<p>itself it becomes transparent and it looks through itself at God. God “shows Himself in the clean mind as in a mirror, remaining, according to what He is in Himself, unseen” (Palamas, <i>Word III, Triad I</i>.” (Stăniloae 1992: 241)</p>	
242-244	<p>“What nature this mind’s transparency is of, in the basis of which the mind, by contemplating on itself, it contemplates God in the same time? Better said, what is the mind capable of being transparent by, and what “shape” this knowing of God, through the mediation of the mind it has, and what the mind realizes like, that it doesn’t see only on itself, but it also sees God? This is for the mind gathered in its intimacy within heart, it find God there. This is for our intimacy, or our heart, when found, it isn’t empty but in its indefinite contents is being reflected the presence of Christ. There is Christ, Who entered as forerunner at Baptism, there is the Kingdom of Heavens within us, there is the dwelling place of Christ, where nothing from the world’s things can penetrate, and the one who crosses increasingly more inside his heart he gets increasingly closer to God. By penetrating in its heart by rejecting all the thoughts, the mind find there Christ dwelling in it. This encounter with God through the mind emptied of everything, we think that it is experienced as in the followings:</p> <p>By turning upon ourselves as thinking subject, after the removal of any content that has by its nature limited contours, we experience a certain removal of the limits and</p>	Knowledge

something that cannot be caught, as an abyss opening, that we get dizzy of, when facing it, or we remain astonished. This dizziness or this astonishment in front of the abyss it means on one hand paralyzing the mind's powers, so that they no longer can move on a progressive direction. The abyss in front of the mind it is a great darkness. But, on the other hand, the mind realizes that this abyss isn't entirely a region belonging to our being, neither a void because of the absence of any reality, so that it isn't actually darkness, but it represents, in continuity or in touching with our subject's indefinite, the infinite deeps, but, still not-illuminated for us, of the godhead. Saint Maximos the Confessor called the God's wisdom as "abyss", and he called the clean mind as "the place of the abyss" that can be therefore called also as abyss. It is called as abyss by the fact that it is made thus (θεοει), as one capable of receiving the abyss, and the wisdom is abyss according to its nature. This means that the mind becomes limited when wraps around objects and finite concepts and it becomes limitless when, by leaving those, it receives the "shapeless" one, who doesn't give the mind any shape. So, when I feel the removal of the mind's limits, I feel in the same time that within mind there is the godhead too. This sheds light also upon the way which we will become god in, in the future, being without limits according to the grace. For this moment is an astonishing of the mind, it represents a total apophatism, or the desertion not only of all the mind's

contents, but even of the mind's working. After this moment of mind's stopping, some people receive as a gift from above the sight of the godlike light.

But this astonishment isn't an inertia like the physical astonishment is, or a spirit's falling asleep. In itself is involved an awareness: the feeling that is in the same time understanding (νοερα αισθησις) above understanding of the limitless and impossible to be caught deep, of God, Who isn't a limited object but He is limitless and sovereign reality. In the removal of our limits we feel the pressure of a presence which penetrates us and which upholds us as foundation of our indefinite existence. That's what we can realize, and we cannot realize anything more. On one hand we realize that this limitless and absolutely sovereign reality it is something else than the reality of our subject, because we experience our subject's reality only as indefinite and as relatively sovereign, because it cannot be infinite and absolutely sovereign. But on the other hand, we cannot separate these in our spiritual experiencing and we cannot discern up where one is and up where another is.

We must highlight here, with the same strength, both these aspects of the experience had by the mind when is gathered within heart. If we accept only the first one we will abolish the unmediated connection of the heart with God, the presence of Jesus within heart, and implicitly the mysterious knowing of God. If we stress only upon the aspect of "non-separated and

indistinct” aspect, we will slide in neo-Platonism and Hegelianism, which see the world in continuity of substance with the absolute and they consider that the gathering of the mind from scattering, and simplifying the mind, they mean finding again the absolute which is one with its intimate substance; so, the absolute doesn’t differ from the world by substance, but only by the fact that the absolute is The One, and the world is His multiple form. In reality, when the subject turns towards himself he doesn’t find only on himself there, and this experience excludes both the distancing from God and the identification to Him. Just when, by disrobing our selves of all the created world’s clothes, we would expect to look at our unveiled subject (γυμνός σους) and to experience the sentiment of the fullest sovereignty, we found ourselves in front of a power whose mastery upon us it proves to be infinitely more imposing and more overwhelming than the mastery of the world. Although, we must undertake a great effort in order to get within reach of its mastery in a conscious manner and to remain there. While under the world’s slavery we fall by inertia, we become servants of God and remain thus through the greatest effort. This is for we become by this, in the same time, really free: enslaved to a loving supreme Person, in the fullest freedom.

If this abyss experienced by our mind when turning towards itself it had been a total darkness, as at Hegel, which we cannot tell anything about, it would have remained the

	<p>possibility of a pantheistic equivocal, or an identification to our subject lost within that abyss. But we said that this abyss allows us to experience it as an absolute sovereignty. And in this it is shown this abyss's character of subject and this is what distinguishes that abyss from our subject. By reaching in our pure intimacy, we experience the infinite, but as Person, presence of God, hidden under the veil of the fullest darkness, like we often feel that close to us there is a person – for we feel that person's influence – but we cannot see that person in an unveiled manner.” (Stăniloae 1992: 242-244)</p>	
244-245	<p>“During prayer the mind gains a self-transparency. Everywhere, the prayer is what makes possible the mind's turning away from all things, from all ideas. This isn't only a mind's act of self-contemplation but it is an ecstasy of the cogitating subject, an act which this cogitating subject transcends himself through, which he extends himself beyond himself through, towards the supreme and infinite Subject. When praying our subject is aware of not being alone but we feel that we are in front of God. It would seem that the prayer isn't also a preoccupation of the subject with himself, but is it's a preoccupation only with God, and therefore getting closer to God in the time of prayer it isn't done through the transparency of the actual subject.</p> <p>But the mental prayer, by searching in the beginning, with the name of Jesus, for the place of the heart, it shows us that the mind, though it is preponderantly preoccupied with God,</p>	Knowledge

	<p>it searches for God through the intimacy of our subject. So, the prayer searches within heart or through heart for Jesus, and the fuller penetrates the heart and it becomes steadfast within heart, the more dominant becomes the certitude that it has found Jesus, that it is in front of Him. Through the mental prayer, the astonishing deeps - which the mind is transparent to after the removal of all the contents from within mind and after the mind's turning back upon itself – they are revealed as deeps of the supreme Subject Who is different from us, in Whose front we humble ourselves. The prayer's humbleness grows up out of the simultaneous awareness about our subject and the supreme Subject, differing from one another, but in connection and in reciprocal penetration. In prayer, we intuit around us and within us, with absolute certitude, the presence of the overwhelming supreme Subject. The more veridical is this experience, the fuller with certitude, the more we feel that the presence of the reality surrounding us it is an infinity - in comparison to which we aren't but a bit – and a sovereignty which everything depend on. This absolute infinity and sovereignty overwhelms us, so that the mind lets itself to be totally engulfed, or filled up with it, so that a consummate union it is accomplished, the heart “swallowing the Lord and the Lord the heart, the two becoming one.” (Stăniloae 1992: 244-245)</p>	
246	“Only in prayer, namely in the mental prayer which we	Knowledge

	<p>contemplate our pure subject through, we experience the presence of God as Subject and we do not cogitate Him, inadequately, as object. By no longer being God in this prayer object of ours, but Subject, Who claims us and Who asks us for an obedience in freedom, He makes us feel His greatness, by keeping related to His majesty the awareness of our nothingness, which still lasts and which urges us to adore Him even more. God is thus the <i>Subject</i> to us, Who stays on the foreground of our sight, our subject staying in His shadow. We are somehow received in His sphere, or He enters the content of our subject, filling it up and overwhelming it insomuch that we forget about ourselves, insomuch that we experience within ourselves His character as prime Subject and the force of the <i>supreme Subject</i>, without confounding Himself to us, for in the same time or in immediate alternation we also feel our smallness and our subordination which last through Him. In whispered or unformulated words, we hear ourselves as repeating in essence the thought of amazement and of prayer: “Lord, how great are You and how small and unworthy I am; have mercy on me!” (Stăniloae 1992: 246)</p>	
246-247	<p>“By following especially the affirmations of Saint Mark the Ascetic, we considered that our heart, or our intimacy has Christ within – or in continuation with our heart - since the beginning (obviously, not a continuation of substance but of presence). It is enough descending within our heart and to</p>	Prayer

	<p>contemplate within our heart or in connection with our heart the infinite abyss of the godlike presence of Jesus. But the methods of the Heart's Prayer let the impression that the heart wouldn't have Jesus in the beginning, but we must bring Him there by prayer. By taking a closer look, we can see than in these methods it is actually about the name of Jesus. With this name we must knock on the heart's door in order the heart to open, and we must make this name sound within heart by repeating it ceaselessly within our heart. Christ Who is within our heart, He opens for us for we are calling His name, for we show Him that we need Him. But our need for Him it is awakened within us by some feeling of His sweetness as close to us. He is the One making us calling upon Him. The name of Jesus is the thought at Jesus. And the fact that a person thinks at another person it is the witness of a mysterious connection and the means of intensifying this connection. When I feel the need for thinking at somebody, usually that person is the one causing within me, by influencing me from distance, this thought about him, as by thinking at that person in a voluntary manner I am sending him a wave from me." (Stăniloae 1992: 246-247)</p>	
247	<p>"Saint Mark the Ascetic said that the good thoughts, the thought worshipping Jesus, they come from Him, the One Who is present within our heart. Without us being from the beginning aware of His presence within our heart, he attracts our thought at Him, and us, by knocking with this thought on</p>	Knowledge

	<p>our heart's door, on His door, after He too knocked on our conscience's door with this thought, He opens to us and we enter the heart where He is, after we too opened to Him in order Him to enter our conscience. By entering our heart, we find Jesus there, but this is for He came out in front of us through our thought at Him, like the Father went out and welcomed his profligate son. Empirically, we cannot ascertain that Jesus was within our heart from before, but it seems to us that He entered our heart only now, in the same time with our entering. But the perseverance which we have been searching for Him by calling upon Him, it cannot be explained except by the fact that He was within us from before, in a hidden manner, but effectively influencing us, for on one hand to help us, and on the other hand also to set our powers in work in discovering Him, in order these powers of ours to be developed and to become able to understand Him. Thus, by searching for Him and by finding Him, in the same time we are searching for and we find our intimacy, or vice versa, this searching consists of our effort stimulate and helped by Him.” (Stăniloae 1992: 247)</p>	
10. The Resting of the Mind or the Second Degree Apophatism. The First Level of the Quietude		
247-248	<p>“According to Saint Gregory Palamas and to Saint Isaac the Syrian, the mental prayer culminates in a stopping of the cogitation, namely of the mind's work.</p> <p>This moment of mind's stopping it isn't the seeing of the godlike Light, but it is a feeling of His presence, caused by His</p>	Prayer

	<p>power. The question is: what can one experience like, this ceasing of the mental activity and which the signs characterizing it are? As we said, the mind when reaching in front of itself during the clean prayer, it experiences a certain astonishment both in front of its own indefinite and especially in front of divine limitless and sovereignty which the mind feels as present. So, this experience has both a negative and a positive side.</p> <p>The negative side consists of the mentioned astonishment; the positive side consists of feeling the divine presence and sovereignty.” (Stăniloae 1992: 247-248)</p>	
249-251	<p>“There are the following characteristics of the stopping of the mental activity:</p> <p>a) This stopping takes place for the mind has reached the top of all the received objects of the cogitation and the mind has renounced to any understanding which is somewhat defined, for the mind has realized that any defined cogitation cannot aim at God. Actually, the mind’s movement or activity it consists of its desire of defining, of specifying some meanings, namely what the mind knows. But this specification fits only the finite, created meanings. When the mind renounced to the preoccupation with the created and finite things, and when the mind is in front of God, then the mind realizes that there is no point in this activity of it, but, on the opposite, it realizes that this activity is damaging to the mind because of lowering the mind back to the finite things.</p>	Prayer

This stopping is caused by the experience of the divine indefinite or infinite. Without this, the mind wouldn't leave all the finite meanings and it wouldn't persist in this state. This stopping cannot be achieved until the mind doesn't overwhelmingly feel the presence of the divine infinity. This stopping is superior to the negative theology that still thinks at the concepts which it denies.

b) From here come out two things: on one hand, experiencing God through the mind's lack of movements it is superior to the knowledge achieved through the affirmative or negative activity, but just this shows that, on the other hand, this lack of movements isn't a simple inertia and insensitiveness, but it is experiencing the divine reality which the mind tries to define it even more; it turns out that this state is a state of prayer, of a prayer that is full of silent amazement, full of helplessness in defining what it asks for and of defining the One Whom it asks from, and Whom the mind feels as listening to itself.

Although this state is a state superior to the prayer, it still is called as prayer, for it is given to the worthy ones during their prayer and its source is the prayer.

c) The mind left everything behind even its own activity that still was turning the mind towards things. The mind is now in front of the Master, at the edge of the earth, looking intensely and in awe at the ocean of life comprised in Him.

Before this the mind wasn't capable of launching by its own

powers, and now it cannot and it doesn't want to turn back. The mind stays now like at His imposing and fluid gate, which the mind cannot enter through. The mind's state can be characterized as an overwhelming amazement. The amazement ties the mind to this ocean, but in the same time it paralyzes the mind so that the mind can no longer work. The mind wants to advance but it cannot. That's why the mind begs for the help from God. This shows us that this stopping of the mind before the Emperor's gate, or before the ocean surrounding Him, it isn't the last level of knowing God. Our spiritual ascension doesn't stop either at this second degree apophatism, or to this ecstasy of the quietude, in knowing God. But the mind will ascend further only by the full coming of the Ghost, Who will elevate the mind to see the godlike world.

Out of the ocean of the divine greatness it emanates a spell making the mind to forget about the things behind, and that it keeps the mind's gaze aiming to it, a spell that is so overwhelming that it paralyzes the mind's movements despite the mind's deep longing for advancing.

d) The fact that the mind has renounced to everything and that it stays still, praying for to be sent to it the boat which to take the mind offshore, which to open the gate for the mind, it unveils a state of great love towards the divine infinity. All over, the prayer is the manifestation of the love for God. And for this love does not cease either now, nor it ceases the

longing for more, this state still is a state of prayer, but it is an undefined prayer.

e) The more the prayer's warmth grows up, the more the love grows up too, in order to reach the fullness in clean prayer, the highest level of the prayer. This love, by still remaining after ceasing the prayer, but like indefinite prayer, it will constitute, together with the Ghost Who has come to help, the bridge of crossing from the edge of the created shore in the ocean's off shore. This is for this prayer, by being well established in the man's being, it wants to launch itself in the off shore of the ocean of God's love too. But this longing is satisfied when the mind will be kidnapped by the godlike light that descends from the divine Being. The bridged itself is thrown within us by God. But godlike light could penetrate within us for our being has opened, full of longing, to the bridge thrown by God, through a longer work. So it was possible for the godlike bridge to be well established within the man's spiritual being. We discern between the love as longer process, a process due to God but also to our own effort, and the love as an unseen wave overblown suddenly from above. The first one has grown up during the whole asceticism and illumination and especially during the prayer and, on the moment of the mind's stopping, to reach the amazement in front of the divine unexplainable and infinite mystery. This still is a state of desiring love, but which no longer is able to advance through any our effort towards the

divine greatness. On the moment of the mental activity's stopping, this love for God has reached an ultimate firmness and warmth that can be hold through our effort, in order the godlike light launched from the other realm, by descending within our mind, to set it in fire, to get it drunk, and by this to open to our mind the light of the godlike inside. This amazed love, which is the positive content of the state of stopping of the mental work, cannot still be called as the last resting of the mind. This is for in its still is the longing for union with God, a longing that has reached the culminant level. It is right that the mind, by being outside the finite things and concepts, it mustn't any longer to pass from one to another in its longing to unite with God, but it stops in a steadfast amazement in feeling the still covered Limitless. But on the other hand, it asks for being given as answer the showing of the godlike Limitless in light. This discovery presupposes, as preparation from the man's part, the love for God gained during a longer time and increased especially during prayer until the culminant stopping of the mind in front of the godlike Boundless.

The godlike light isn't caught by this firm, awaken, warm love itself, grown up through affirmative and negative reasoning about God and through the full of feeling prayer and now stopped in amazement, but in this state of a soul prepared for a long time and it descends at once, as a gift exclusively from above, the love for God as overwhelming drunkenness that

kidnaps the soul from the self. While the first love belonged to the previous phases of the ascension, as being due to the human effort too, it waits for being kidnapped beyond itself in the union with God, in a state of fiery, drunk, ecstatic love. It waits not only to see God as a sun mirrored in itself – in the sense used by Saint Gregory of Nyssa – but to be kidnapped in the interior itself of the transcendent sun.

This knowing of God beyond our own deeps, when the own subject is no longer directly seen and the divine subject is no longer seen indirectly, but vice versa, by taking place after the total getting out of the mind from itself, beyond itself, through the suspension of all the mind's natural works and by being kidnapped by the Holy Ghost, knowledge that is one with the love, it is what it was expressed in East through seeing the godlike light.

f) Experiencing of feeling the divine, boundless mystery, the state of infinite prayer and the warm and firm love for God, are other characteristics which make this apophatism differing from the negative theology in which it is rather active the intellect.

Besides these, one cannot reach this experience without an appeasement of all his worries, namely the ones meant to produce pleasure or everything that can cause pain and needs. Once one has reached the feeling of this godlike ocean, this feeling will master the man with so much charm, that the man remains serene in tasting it, not being attracted by

	anything from outside. Although, there is in this feeling too, and therefore in the quietude produced by it, a progress. Out of the godlike Boundless, even if He is felt as covered in darkness, the mind learns more and more meanings.” (Stăniloae 1992: 249-253)	
253	“The spiritual man reaches an even greater quietude when he is elevated to seeing the godlike light. This is for even there exists an advancement in this too, accompanied by a fiery love, on the other hand it is an appeasement from any work of the own being and from any worldly worries.” (Stăniloae 1992: 253)	Prayer
Third Part		
The Consummation through the Union with God or through Deification		
1. The Love and the Dispassion		
The Love's Levels		
254	“One cannot reach the union with God except through the clean prayer. “The virtue of the prayer works the mystery or our union with God, said Saint Gregory Palamas; for the prayer it is the bond of the rational beings with their Maker” (<i>About Prayer</i> , G.P., 150, 1117). But the union with God is above even the clean prayer. The union with God means perfect love. And this perfect love cannot be given by the man but it comes from God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 254)	Union with God
254	“Even before being in state of clean prayer, the man must have cleaned himself of passions. But the cleaning of passions	Union with God

	<p>is one with the growing up of the love for God. Thus, the love from God by dripping in advance in our soul, it strengthens our soul in the quietude of the dispassion and in the clean prayer. And by these there comes within him even more love. Better said, now is working within him only the godlike love, or the Holy Ghost.” (Stăniloae 1992: 254)</p>	
255	<p>“There is a tight connection between love and dispassion. The love presupposes the dispassion and at its turn it strengthens the dispassion, by the fact that it is opposite to the passions which represent the egotism. Where there are passions, there the love cannot be. That’s why the love comes within our soul in the whole its amplitude after we have reached the dispassion, after we have liberated ourselves of passions. Of course the culminant prayer too, above the prayer through concepts and words, one will achieved it also only after the liberation of passions. This is for cannot pray appropriately the one who is not appeased and who cannot direct himself exclusively towards God, and while he still is preoccupied egotistically with himself. In this sense the love sums up all the other virtues, for through each virtue it is killed a passion. But the love is the immediate fruit of the prayer. “All the virtues help the mind to reach the love for God but, more than all of them, it helps the clean prayer. This is for by flying through this one towards God, it gets out of all the existing things”, said Saint Maximos the Confessor (G.P. 90, 964). The passions mean, shortly, the love for the self, the love for God</p>	Love

	is the opposite of the love for the self. “The one who loves on himself he cannot love God” said Diadochus. “But the one who doesn’t love on himself due to the overwhelming richness of the love from God, he loves God, for one like this he doesn’t search for his glory, but he searched for the glory of God. This is because the one who loves on himself he searches for his glory, while the one who loves God he loves the glory of the One Who has created him. This is because it is characteristic to the sensitive soul, on one hand to always search for the glory of God in all the commandments he fulfills, and on the other hand to delight himself into his humbleness” (<i>The Romanian Philokalia</i> , vol. I, p. 343).” (Stăniloae 1992: 255)	
255	“The love for God, on the highest level, it isn’t only freedom from passions, but it is the gift from God that descends within the soul who has reached this state.” (Stăniloae 1992: 255)	Love
255	“While the clean prayer starts from below, of course by being helped by the hidden grace of the Holy Ghost, the culminant love it is the answer from above, the answer of God. Through it, the godlike is unveiled to us and is felt by us.” (Stăniloae 1992: 255)	Love
256	“Here isn’t about the love that grows up with the prayer, and out of the prayer, but here is about the love as uncreated divine energy, as gift from above.” (Stăniloae 1992: 256)	Uncreated Divine Energies
256	“Unlike the Catholicism, which doesn’t admit uncreated energies of God and that’s why must consider the love too as	Uncreated Divine Energies

	<p>a created gift, the Orthodoxy considers the love as uncreated energy, communicated by the Holy Ghost, a godlike and deifying energy, which we really participate through, to the life of the Holy Trinity. “The love comes from God” said Saint John (I, 4: 7). “But this love presupposes, according to Saint Basil, an own disposition of the created nature, a seed or a power of love within the man’s being, who is called to reach the consummation through love” (Lossky: 211).” (Stăniloae 1992: 256)</p>	
256-257	<p>“The man has the virtual capacity of becoming subject of the divine love and in a certain measure the man tends towards that. The godlike image from within man it consists of this. But the man cannot have the love itself, in its fullness, from himself, but he receives the love from God, and this means that the man cannot achieve the likeness to God except in communion with God. Namely, even if in the image is hidden the virtuality of the likeness to God, this virtuality cannot become actuality by itself, but only under the flame of the godlike work or love.” (Stăniloae 1992: 256-257)</p>	Love
257	<p>“We cannot find the nature in its pure state, but we find it only as sub-nature, or in state of nature penetrated by grace. So we cannot know the natural love in its purity too. The love we see at man, outside the connection with God, it isn’t even the natural love. The great deficiencies of such love show us that the true love cannot be except a gift from God. When the nature has reached its healthy state, in its love will be the</p>	Love

	divine grace too.” (Stăniloae 1992: 257)	
257	<p>“In this natural love there is active the man too. But above this level, there is the one in whom it works exclusively the God’s love. Actually, we can discern three levels of love: a) the tendencies of natural sympathy in the state of the nature fallen off grace; b) the Christian love which by using these tendencies it grow up out of the divine grace and out of the own efforts; this grows and becomes firm; this love take the nature to some kind of nature’s fulfillment; this love is, at the beginning, little firm, and it later becomes increasingly firmer and more intense. Diadochus refers sometimes to the first kind of love, and sometimes he refers to the second kind of love, when he speaks about the natural love. At its beginnings, the second kind of love, being hesitant, it can easily be confounded to the natural sympathy, of better said, to the love of the one who lacks the grace. But on the measure it progresses, it becomes fortified, and it comes closer to the love as ecstasy, which is a gift exclusively from above. The second love, called also as Christian love, it prepares the soul for ecstasy. These two can be sometimes wrapped under the same name, especially when it comes about the highest levels of the first kind of love. c) Finally, the love as ecstasy or exclusively as gift from above, it comes after a long preparation through the second kind of love, and it lasts for short moments, in order the second kind of love to gain a new force and to continue its growth. While during the</p>	Love

	second kind of love the man is elevated to the state of the nature restored in grace, the love as exclusive gift from above it elevates the man above the nature's limits. When we speak about true love, we often speak about the second kind of love, in opposition to the first kind of love which is overwhelmed by egotism. But this true love we are speaking about it still isn't the love as exclusively godlike power." (Stăniloae 1992: 257)	
257	"The full love it means a total victory of the man upon himself, not in the sense that he would despise on himself, consequently to a discouragement, but in the sense that he positively affirms the life, but he considers that the true life in itself it experiences an infinity of the power of self-giving, which he obviously cannot have it from himself." (Stăniloae 1992: 257)	Love
258	"The divine love has a firmness which no vicissitude can shake it, ant this is stranger to the natural love. The one having this love he feels within himself a spring always gushing up light and joy. The natural love cannot have these virtues, for the natural love falls so easily and which is weakened by any evil thing it suffers." (Stăniloae 1992: 257)	Love
258	"The godlike love descending within man it presupposes a victory upon the egotism manifested through passions and, by being a man's positive getting out of himself, it is the same time love for God and love for fellow humans. Of course, by being the power of this love received from God and by being obtained through aiming our soul - through prayer towards	Love

	God -, it is correct to say that the love for God is the source of the love for people, and not the opposite. Not from the love for people one reaches to the love for God, but from the love for God one reaches the love for people, the last one being a prolongation of the first one. (...) This doesn't mean that the love for people can sometimes be absent." (Stăniloae 1992: 258)	
259	"Of course, the man cannot comprise in himself the whole love from God. But it isn't less true that, having the love from God within himself, the man feels it like something endless. This love grows up on the measure of exercise and of the will to intensify it. This is for on the measure the man open his heart towards his fellow humans he widens his heart for the ocean of the godlike love." (Stăniloae 1992: 259)	Love
259	"The godlike love is drunkenness for it overwhelms with its enthusiasm the mind's worldly reckoning and the body's feeling. This love moves the one who is partaker to it on another reality plan. He sees another world, a world having logic that darkness the logic of the usual life, and he receives the feeling of other states overwhelming the feeling of the bodily pains or pleasures. That's why the martyrs seem fools to this world, but they are the true wise men." (Stăniloae 1992: 259)	Love
2. The Love as Factor of Consummate Union and as Ecstasy		
260	"The great mystery of the love it is the union accomplished	Union with God

	amongst themselves by the ones who love one another, without being they abolished as free subjects. The connection established by love it doesn't consist only of the fact that the ones who love one another they think at each other with pleasure - namely of the orientation of each ones' intention towards another - but in the fact that each one receives the other one within himself." (Stăniloae 1992: 260)	
260-261	"Amongst the ones who love one another there is not separation. On the other hand, it would be simplistic to conceive the love only as a communication of energy from one to another, and there would be totally wrong too, to conceive the love as identification of selves. The energy communicated from one to another amongst the ones who love each other, it hasn't a physical character and it isn't communicated in the form which the physical energies communicate it in. In a certain meaning, the loved one doesn't send only an energy of his in the being of the one who loves him, but he sends on himself as a whole, without ceasing to remain in himself too. He project the whole his being through his energy in the soul of the one who loves him. And the image of the loved one it doesn't impose forcedly by itself, but it is received and it is kept with joy, better said it is absorbed by the one who loves, so that one cannot tell which of them sends together with his image a greater energy from himself to another: the loved one or the one who loves." (Stăniloae 1992: 260-261)	Love
261	"This reciprocal communication of energy takes place between	Love

two people as between God and man. Here, in the first place, God sends His energy within man. And the divine eros by descending within man it makes him absorb in himself the projection of the image of God. But it is not less true that the divine energy, since communicated to the man, it turns back towards God and in this turning back it has the form of the affection of the human subject, awakened by the divine energy. This is for not only God loves the man but the man too loves God, or, the man sends towards God energy of his own, or the divine energy dressed up and imprinted by the intentionality and by the affection of the human subject. If, as Saint John Climacus said, the face of the loves one it transforms us entirely according to its image and it fill sup our face with joy and charm, it means that his energy it is sent within us and it works within us, but not in a physical or subconscious manner, but by our will, affection, and conscience, all of these eased by that energy that works in a deeper mode within us.

This work of the loved one absorbed by the being who loves him and vice-versa, it was noticed and insistently described by Ludwig Binswanger. He called this absorption of the loved image and the transformation this absorption causes it: *imagination* or *imagining* in the etymological sense of the words. This imagination isn't a simple fantasy or illusion, without a real object, but it means receiving within soul the image of the real being, an intimate connection between the

two beings who love one another. The image of the loved one, or of the one who loves, it is lived as a true upholding or foundation of my life.

Binswanger wasn't content only by ascertaining this fact of the "imaginative" love, of the joy of always seeing the image of the loved being in thought, but he also searched for an explanation of this. And the explanation consists of a fundamental union accomplished by the persons who love each other. We have seen that we experience God in prayer as absolute and sovereign subject. We also experience as sovereign subject any of our fellow humans, and our subject too. Neither our own subject nor the subject of our fellow human cannot be captured, comprised, subordinated, or made object. While I cannot capture my fellow human's subject, and this happens especially in love when I do not even try something like this, so that I cannot annul his sovereignty, I still experience him in love as he gives himself to me; I do not feel myself as a lonely individual in opposition to him, or I do not feel him in opposition to me, for, if it was like that the love connection would be broken. In love I do not live only on myself, or through myself, but I also live my fellow human and through him, without him ceasing to be a subject independent from me. This still means that I do not have him as an object of mine, as part of my individuality, but he is in connection with me not as mine but as ours. His subject is given to me, or he unveils himself as given to me, as my

subject does too, in as sovereign existence, but still depending on my existence, and lived together with my existence. He becomes more intimate to me than all things I possess, I feel him penetrated within me more deeply than anything, and I penetrate within him more than all things he has. The intimacy is fuller between me and him than between me and all things I possess, but I still do not possess him as a thing, I cannot reduce him to something mastered by my own “self” and I cannot possess him by myself.

If you give yourself to me but you still remain free and sovereign, namely not subordinated to me as subject, and if I give myself to you likewise, it means that neither me or you won’t become the exclusive property of someone, but I will be yours without ceasing to be mine too, and you are mine without losing your freedom, without ceasing to be yours too. Namely, I am ours, and you are ours. Actually, neither I or you are ours in the meaning of some common objects, but both I and you experience us as a unity of free subjects who are so tightly connected than they cannot be separated from one another, as a unity lives by each one of the two subjects, your subject being equally intimate and necessary to me as mine is, or even constituting to me, or to my subject, de center of preoccupation and the source of living, like my subject constituted to you such a source too.

We are in a unity, each one looking at another. You are necessary to me, you belong to my experience, without being

incorporated into my own self, and I belong to your existence without being incorporated within you. You are necessary to me not in order I to make of you my subordinate and servant, not because I would feel the need for such a subordinate and servant, but in order you to be my center of preoccupation and service. You are necessary to me as autonomous subject, and not as subordinate subject. You are necessary to me in order I to replace the care for me for the care for you, in order to place you in my self's place. You become so intimate to me, so much one with me, I attract you so much in the center of my existence, so that you substitute my "self". You hold the place of my "self", you hold within me the place of the prime person, but still remaining independent from me. (...) In the same time, you are doing the same to me, and in this is being manifested the independence of your subject from me, and just by this your subject makes me fully happy. This is a substitution of the selves. I was given, by you, the place of my "self", and I have taken the place of your "self" within you, by your will and not by constraining you.

But you have taken the place of my "self" within me by still remaining autonomous, and therefore there isn't about an absorption of you within me, but it is also about mine getting out of myself, mine living not around my own self, but around you, as there it is also about a living of yours around me. I do not experience only your living around me, but I experience my living around you too. For the center of my living is no

	<p>longer me but you are, I experience you as center, but for I am the center of your living, my value is rewarded through you, so that through me I experience your value, but in the same time through you I take note of my value too; thus, even about me as value I know through you, or I have on myself in my own depth, through you. My conscience is not detached from the conscience of you, from the conscience of “us”.” (Stăniloae 1992: 261-263)</p>	
263-264	<p>“Actually, neither belong I to you nor you belong to me, but both of us belong to a common “us”. I exceed myself in the connection of love with you, I am no longer locked up in me, but now I am somehow between me and you, I am out of the circle of my property, as you too are out of the circle of your property, and we created a unity that is no longer reduced to the property of a single self, mine or yours, and which still isn’t outside us both. It isn’t about having us both in a common property, like we can have diverse objects in common, but as my singular self is above the quality as property of mine, but I still live it, likewise our selves are above an individual or common property, but we live them in common; both me and you we are living out of the unity of the two subjects, without these two subjects ceasing to be two; I live “us” and you live “us” too. That’s why my report with you it cannot be expressed as incorporation of yours within me, or as mine incorporation within you, but it can be expressed as “encounter”, as mine getting out of myself and yours getting</p>	Love

	<p>out of yourself; I stand open before you and you stand open before me. This reciprocal openness is appurtenance and freedom in the same time. I cannot exist without living you nor can you exist without living me. I grow up spiritually by living you, and you do likewise. It is a completion of mine through you, and it is a completion of yours through me.” (Stăniloae 1992: 263-264)</p>	
264-265	<p>“I need to communicate you some meanings, and if you listen to me with understanding, I will gain a new understanding too of these meanings. I gain in depth, and I become transparent to me as subject, by the fact that I penetrate the depths of your subject, or by the fact that you open your depths voluntarily. You are my hope and my strength, and I am your hope and strength. Just by the fact that you know you are my hope and strength, you are getting stronger, and I likewise, just by the fact that I know I am your hope and strength. My and your appurtenance to a common “us” it determines me, when you shout out for my help, to feel that something belonging to me is suffering, and if I hit you I would diminish and lessen myself of something that is much more essential than losing one of my belongings. Maybe that’s why the French says: “Partir c’est mourir un peu”. Leaving you, I somewhat die, as you die too when leaving me. So it can be explained the acute feeling or conscience remorse for the evil I have done to others and the responsibility I feel for my fellow humans. Only by the fact that through love your</p>	Love

	<p>appurtenance to the circle of my existence it is revealed to me, as part of “us”, as part of a common reality which both of us belong to, and only the fact that in this “us” which I cannot normally exist without, I have the role to receive from you, as you have the role to receive from me, it explains that thing which I feel like a wonder to: that you love me. Each subject understand what he love the other subject for, for he sees in that one a series of features and helps, he feels that he couldn’t live without another. (...) No one can realize how much he means for another, but he can realize how much another means to him.” (Stăniloae 1992: 264-265)</p>	
265	<p>“Love is the reverse of the pride and of the self-appreciation. Love reveals the fact that nobody can be happy without others, that one’s existence becomes rich and deep through other people. By exclusively living within myself, my existence gets exhausted of any content.” (Stăniloae 1992: 265)</p>	Love
265	<p>“The Christian love is intertwined with the humbleness.” (Stăniloae 1992: 265)</p>	Love
265	<p>“All the more difficult is to understand the mystery of God’s love for us and the God’s desire that we to answer Him with our love. The value granted by God to us it is amazing. The love is the proof of our eternal existence and the means for our consummation.” (Stăniloae 1992: 265)</p>	Love
265	<p>“Sometimes, this sentiment of our lack of importance makes us hesitating to say some appreciation words to somebody</p>	Love

	who seems to us as being too superior to us in order to need that from us, some other times we address harsh word to the people, reckoning that our words cannot have any real effect in them. But later we are surprised by how much could those words hurt, or how much hurt the lack of a good word from us.” (Stăniloae 1992: 265)	
265	“It would seem at a first glance that what determines us to not pay our attention to some persons who seem superior to us it is the same humbleness which our love must be accompanied by. But the true humbleness doesn’t hesitate paying other the whole attention; the sentiment of the own smallness, by being overwhelmed by the sentiment of other’s value, it must make us forget about the lack of importance our words and attentions could have, and to pay to another the whole our attention by no longer thinking at us but by exclusively thinking at him. The love is in this sense too, a surpassing of the self.” (Stăniloae 1992: 265)	Love
266	“The humble feeling of this smallness of our being it doesn’t exclude an own growth through our fellow human’s love. I feel that if I lived through myself outside the relation of love with somebody, I would be nothing, but in the love relation which I am in I am growing up, but I reduce to him the whole plus that I am experiencing. I have the same sentiment when I am growing up in the love for God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 266)	Love
266-267	“Love is achieved when two subject, in their quality as subject, they encounter one another in a reciprocal feeling,	Love

namely without reducing one another to the state of objects, but by unveiling themselves at maximum, as subject, and by reciprocally giving themselves to one another and into the whole their freedom. The love is the reciprocal penetration of two subjects in their intimacy, more than the interpenetration between a subject and a thing. The two persons do not cease, while loving each other, to be sovereign and autonomous. Through love you penetrate the intimacy of one of your fellow human, in the core of his being, more than you penetrate in the being of an object, even if you assimilate that object by eating it. You penetrate your fellow human without destroying him and without diminishing him, but, on the opposite, by giving him the occasion to grow up. That's why the love is the supreme union and reciprocal promotion, and, just because of that, the love is the supreme knowing in which the fellow human isn't passive, but he is freer than in any other state or relation. The more I love him, the more he reveals himself to me. The human subject can actualize such a connection with any other subject when he has noticed him through the mediation of the senses. So, virtually, the human subject is in such a connection and he is called to actualize it with anybody. But the possibility of this relation to be actualized it is more or less impeded by the attempt of the subjects to reciprocally reduce one another to the state of objects, or by the lack of attention which a subject passes by another subject with. The pride, the egotistic passions they atrophy

	<p>the normal connection which a normal virtuality from within us it asks for to be developed within any individual. When we develop this connection or when we unveil ourselves in it, we place ourselves much more than ever before, in the interior of another, but also in our interior too. Now it is achieved and it becomes transparent our own depth and our fellow human's depth. It is revealed, it gives a considerable plus of reality. The other one reveals to us as having an amazing depth, an unsuspected richness. But what it is odd it is that this plus cannot be exactly defined. While by remaining in the contact with our fellow human, when the great richness of his subject is covered to us, we can formulate in definite concepts some features of his and we tend to define him exactly, and unveiling his subject places us, a contrary, in a connection with a unmatched greater plus, but which is impossible to specify, in its essence, in concepts." (Stăniloae 1992: 266-267)</p>	
267	<p>"The love is a huge plus of knowledge, in the same time producing a plus of life in the loved one and in the one who loves him, by developing at maximum his being and my being. But one cannot formulate this knowledge in concepts. Here we can see the meaning which Binswanger gave to the term: "imagination". By realizing through a direct experience that within the subject of my fellow human there is a richness which cannot be delimited in concepts, I employ the imagination for the whole plus from within him, which I experience, but which I cannot formulate in concepts."</p>	Love

	(Stăniloae 1992: 267)	
267	<p>“This imagination has multiple grounds of truth. In the first place, the subject of each one hides indefinite virtualities, which can be valorized through love. That’s why the one who loves notices in the one whom he loves, these virtualities increasingly more. This is for, in the first place, for he notices in his voluntary manifestations and in his soul’s vibrations a multitude of nuances revealing latencies unnoticed by the quick or superficial look of the ones who are hostile or indifferent to him. In the second place, for the one who love he really beautifies by his love each trait of the one whom he loves, not only for he projects from himself a veil of light upon them, but also by the fact that the one who is loved, by feeling another’s love, he lives that love as a power that brings forth from his depths everything he has better and in the same time it increases him considerably; actually, by our love we make other to be better and more beautiful, ads we do with ourselves too. And in the third place, the one who loves creates within himself some kind of image of light of the one whom he loves, and this is due either totally to the virtualities hidden in the traits of the loved one, or to the ideals which the tendencies of the one who loves aspire to in an unknown manner, or to the fact that there is a synthesis of the aspirations of one of them and of the virtualities of another, which seems more probably to us.” (Stăniloae 1992: 267)</p>	Love
267-268	“By and large, the imagination is the product of some forces,	Love

of certain latencies, or of some possibilities from the common content of the two ones who love one another, out of the content of “us”. And if the one who imagines them he strongly believes in them, and this takes place in the true love, the force at their basis - which the will is engages in too, being communicated from the one who loves to the loved one - it determines the loved one too, to strive himself towards actualizing those latencies of his, not to say that within him there works also the ideal image he has about another. The indefinite so rich in nuances of the loved subject, or the enriched duality of the subject who love one another, it comprises as virtualities everything that is expresses through their imagination, and the force of this imagination which is the force of the love, if it is true love, and steadfast, and strong, it succeed in actualizing these virtualities in each of them. Thus, the image of the loved one, idealized by the imagination of the one who loved him, it becomes a model force transforming the loved one, day by day, while the one who love he actualizes increasingly more his idealized image created by another. Actually, between my image actualized by the one who loves me, and his image idealized by myself, there takes place a reciprocal fusion by communication, and I, being transformed according to the idealized image made to me by another, I actualize in the same time my idealized image which started to be the idealized image which the other one shapes himself according to. And by each one of them

	<p>looking at another, in the light of the reciprocal idealized image – for by looking at another each of them sees an idealized image of himself -, each one of them sees an idealized image of himself which he shapes himself according to. Of course the new image of both of them doesn't bear only the traits of one or of another, but it is a synthesis of both of them, for it isn't an egotistic victory of one "self" but it is "our" victory upon my and your egotism, and a growth of mine and of yours." (Stăniloae 1992: 267-268)</p>	
268	<p>"If the imagination had lacked, each one's image would have become callous, and it would have been lost its beauty. The imagination is the force which the one who loves he brings like a diver with, out of the infinite richness of the one whom he loves, new beauties and lights and transparence, on that one's face and then on his own face, or on the common face, and partially he enriches the one whom he loves in a real mode with them. If the love has ended, the imagination will stop. The imagination's force is the love, and the love's force is the imagination. And for the love is in contact with a deep and true reality, the imagination has at its turn a real basis. On the other hand, they have a real creator power." (Stăniloae 1992: 268)</p>	Love
268	<p>"We can go even further in clarifying the whole power of this imagination. As we have seen before, the one who loves, by unveiling the indefinite deeps of his fellow human subject, he also unveils his ones, without this meaning that he couldn't</p>	Love

descend through himself too, to these own depths, of course if he doesn't lack the love for people by and large, but he will be able to have this power only if he has love for God. But we have seen that the one who descends in the indefinite depths of his own subject he intuitively, in connection with his own indefinite, the divine indefinite too.

Of course, the way which, in such a case, the subject descends in his depths on, it is the way of the prayer. To the one who would reckon that, by admitting such a way of descending in the own depths, we contradict our affirmation that without other's love we cannot unveil our own subject, we answer that the prayer does not stay in contradiction with the way of the love, but it is at its turn a way of continuous growing up in love. This is for by advancing through the Heart's Prayer to the mental prayer within heart, what upholds us in this effort is our love for Jesus, a love that grows continuously, transforming us, by spiritually imagining His spiritual image, in His image, and by feeling Him increasingly united with our own "self", in an "us" which I no longer am able to get out of, because of the danger of being lost. And not only I receive within me the "Self" of Christ, becoming in His image, but also His "Self" receives my "self" within Him, and He receives even my body in Himself, so that He frames me too, in His clean senses, and in His clean deeds. Thus, all of us who believe, we become one "body" with Him, and amongst us, a fact that will come to perfection in

	<p>the future life.”</p> <p>This is being done especially through the clean prayer addressed to Jesus. And the one who accomplished this substitution of “selves” between me and Christ, and between all the ones united in Christ, he is the Holy Ghost. He is the Ghost of this communion. For the Holy Ghost is the Ghost of communion in the Holy Trinity too. But until becoming capable of such a prayer which fills me up with Christ, I must have grown up considerably in the love for my fellow human too, and in the intervals which this prayer is interrupted on, I must feel increasingly fuller the love for them. The levels of the spiritual ascension aren’t so separated as we have described them due to methodological reasons, but they coexist several of them and the one who has reached a level he doesn’t remain forever on it but he descends on lower levels too, but he still brings with him new spiritual riches, and he still remains capable of ascending more easily on the levels which he has descended from. No one can be, while still on earth, always in prayer, or always in feeling an actual love.” (Stăniloae 1992: 268-269)</p>	
270	<p>“The true love for any fellow human, the love that never fails, it cannot be born in the absence of the prayer and in the absence of the purifying of passions asceticism. It is true that without the fellow human subject’s unveiling in the true love, we neither unveil our subject’s depth, so that we do not reach the ultimate consummation in prayer; but neither can we</p>	Love

	<p>achieve, without prayer, the full love for people. We believe that the prayer as love for God, and the love for our fellow humans, they progress in parallel and in an interconditioning. But the faith in God prevails. The faith in God it gives power to our will of loving our fellow humans, as also in sustaining our effort in prayer.” (Stăniloae 1992: 270)</p>	
270	<p>“We reckon that who unveils himself he loves the other one, helped by prayer too, or he has ascended on the level of the mental prayer, helped by love too. And by unveiling the indefinite of the own subject, he unveils in connection and in communication with him the divine infinite too. All the more is this as he unveils also in the depths of the beloved fellow human and in inward communication with him the divine infinite. If so, the “imagination” of the love has an infinite source in dressing the fellow human up with the traits of the most ideal features, for our fellow human can appropriate all the things in an actual mode, by being in connection with Christ, either directly, or through myself, for I love him out of my connection with Christ, Who is the source of all virtues. This is the full meaning of the loving imagination. But the infinite that opens in front of the love it isn’t an infinite in continuity of substance with us. It is right that, in the loving form of “us”, the existence finds an indefinite overflowing in each one of the two selves as a flooding with joy, as an overwhelming drunkenness. But no matter how much we would feel the indefinite of our fellow human, we still realize</p>	Love

	that as our indefinite isn't everything, but it stays in connection with a source differing from it and infinite, likewise the richness of our fellow human, or of the community between us, it has a source differing from him, or from "us". Otherwise, the loving community doesn't last, it quickly exhausts its upholding spring. The love places "us" in connection with the infinite, only when this infinite is godlike, when it differs from our nature, namely when we are imparted with this infinite as a gift. In the community of love between me and another there is God present too, without this meaning that the love for another it anticipates the encounter with God." (Stăniloae 1992: 270-271)	
271	"Binswanger reckons that the infinite of the love it is an infinite of the universal nature and that the road towards encountering this absolute leads only through a concrete "you". That's why in his opinion there isn't a road leading firstly to the Absolute as Person, for Binswanger doesn't think at an Absolute as Person. We, the Christians believing in the Absolute-as-Person, we reckon that we can encounter this absolute "You" and only Him can and wants to direct our love towards the persons created in His image." (Stăniloae 1992: 271)	Love
271	"The sentiment of plenitude, of overflowing, of happy drunkenness, as the Holy Fathers called it, we actually live it too, in our love for others, all the more for the communication of the love starts both from within me and form within my	Personalism

	<p>fellow human. But this love cannot have as ultimate source a universal natural basis. Only the supreme, infinite Person can be the source of such a plenary love and joy. This is for you realize that the overflowing joy had by another for you, and the boundless will of him to comprise you as whole in himself, it is not only you the one who cause it with your relativity, neither it can start from the content of his nature, nor can come out of an impersonal source. The other one unveils himself to you and you to him, as a gift of the infinite Person. So, the joy for another it is also a gift form the supreme Person from beyond you and him, Who, through him He gives Himself to you and through you He gives Himself to him. This conviction is enforced to you also by the fact that this joy doesn't last except for a moment at the time. If everything had come from nature and it had belonged to the nature, it should have lasted and it could have lasted permanently. But when we receive that joy, it seems to us that our being is melting down like, it seems is being shattered, it seems we would faint out, if that joy would last foe more and it would increase in intensity. If this spiritual joy had been born out of the nature's content which we are co-natural with, how could have been us capable of experiencing our incapacity of living it wholly, and for a longer time in continuation, or even all the time?" (Stăniloae 1992: 271)</p>	
272	<p>"We can spend a longer time in the drunkenness of the love for God at the end of the clean prayer. This is explained firstly</p>	Love

	<p>by the fact that the long prayer, with the forsaking of the narrow forms of the images and of the interests for the limited objects of the world, it has accustomed us to the: “wideness of the heart”, in order our heart to be able to comprise a joy that overflows our heart’s margins. Of course, on these culminant levels of the prayer the drunkenness of the love it doesn’t appear as a product of the preparation through prayer. The prayer leads to the mind’s “stopping” from any activity directed towards what is limited. But the drunkenness of the love for God it descends unexpectedly and suddenly from above. Of course, as we have seen before, we must specify here that besides this love as spiritual drunkenness, as overflowing joy, which expresses the total absorption of your face within another and of his face within you, there is also a calmer love, led by rational considerations, that grows up little by little. This is a preparatory condition for the other kind of love. This love too one gains it with the help of the grace he has received at Baptism, but without the own efforts to be excluded. The other love comes from above, and not as produced by the calm love, though still needs preparation through the calm love.” (Stăniloae 1992: 272)</p>	
272	<p>“In our love for a fellow human we also distinguish this more prolonged stage and the overflowing joy of some moments as a gift from above. If we are engulfed sometimes by such a joy for a fellow of ours without us having prepared for it through a</p>	Love

	special love for him, this is due to the fact that our soul has been preparing, by and large, for love, through the prayer as loving road towards God and through the consequence following from there in loving any man. Anyway, the moment of ecstatic joy for a man, by not following to a special preparation for enlarging our heart by forsaking all images, concepts, and limited interests, it cannot last except much less than the drunkenness of the love for God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 272)	
272	“A second motif making the ecstasy of the love for God to last longer, it is the fact that God Himself, being now in relation with us, and therefore close to us, He gives out nature a wideness capable of experiencing more steadfastly the love’s infinity. This infinity itself overwhelms our being so much than it seems that even our bones, which are the more resistant frame of our being, they are melted down. The spiritualized man no longer feels anything human in the love which he loves God with, but he feels exclusively the power of the godlike love poured within him, and he loves God with the same love which God loves him with.” (Stăniloae 1992: 272)	Love
273	“The ecstasy of the love, namely, or the sentiment of the union with God, the sentiment that one forms together with God a “us” presently experienced, that ecstasy becomes longer, producing an increasingly happy joy and warmth of the soul. And the prolonged ecstasy makes also the intervals between one ecstasy and another to become increasingly	Love

	<p>fuller with the conscience of God's actual presence, of His most calm love, intertwined with the mind's work, so that the man's life gains a continuity of uninterrupted love. This continuity was expressed by Saint Apostle Paul when he said: "If we went out of our mind, it is for God, and if we are with our mind whole, it is for you" (II Cor. 5: 13), understanding here also: "but for God too". (Stăniloae 1992: 273)</p>	
273	<p>"We will be partakers to the perpetual ecstasy only in the eternal life. Only then we will exist the discursivity, only then we will be partakers to that uninterrupted essential penetration of us by the divine subject, as also by the human subjects, and we will be partakers to an eternal substantial knowledge, to a union with the intimacy of the divine and human reality itself." (Stăniloae 1992: 273)</p>	Union
273	<p>"We have to clarify what - through our union with the Absolute Person, or with one or another of the human subjects, union obtained through love - it is achieved the union of the whole human nature like, obtained through love, amongst all the individual, and the union of the human nature with God? This is for it was affirmed by the Holy Fathers. Saint Maximos said that firstly the love unified the individual man, by removing the anger, the cunningness, the greediness, and all the other things which the man has been divided in, through the bodily love for the self. This is for no longer being those, there cannot last any trace of evilness; they are replaced with the virtues which make the love's</p>	Union

	power whole again. And, through this unification of the individual man it is accomplished the unification of the human individuals as well.” (Stăniloae 1992: 273)	
274	“How have we become through love as “a sole man”, united with God? At least as long as we live on earth, we cannot experience directly in time the love as short ecstatic state, except in relation either with God or with one of our fellow humans; and such it is the consummate union achieved by it. Especially the ecstatic love for God in the mental prayer absorbs us so much than we forget about people, a thing that doesn’t happen so exclusively on the moment of the ecstatic love for our fellow human. This is because in the last case, in the absorbing contemplation of our fellow human, we realize that in connection with his subject’s indefinite it stays the divine indefinite. So, it is directly achieved by this the union between us and God as well. But we do not experience on the moment of this ecstatic love for God, or for one of our fellow humans, and actual union with all the people.” (Stăniloae 1992: 274)	Union
274	“Only in the daily calm love, manifested in deeds and thoughts, in the Christian love in a wider sense, we can experience more or less a love for all the people. My interests, my passions, my contradictory opinions, as voluntary manifestations, they no longer tear apart the unity of nature between me and my fellow humans. On each moment I accept judging the things from the point of view of my fellow human,	Love

	<p>by renouncing to my own point of view. By doing this successively, with diverse fellow human whom I come in contact with, it is being strengthened the sentiment of my union, actual and virtual, with anybody. From my part there is no longer any division between me and them; I no longer see any division there. If they still see some, I don't." (Stăniloae 1992: 274)</p>	
274-275	<p>"My steadfast behavior in love strengthens the sentiment of my unity with my fellow humans into God. This reliefs on moments of ecstatic love, on moments of contemplating the subject of any fellow human in what he has conquering, indefinite, and mysterious, and the living of a consummate union. At their turn these moments strengthen my full of attention and abnegation behavior towards any fellow human. My love's energy for one of my fellow humans, grown up also through the will's effort, but especially on that moments of ecstatic contemplation, it is then easily directed towards other persons too. And I gain everywhere a steadfast disposition of love for anybody, a rejoicing of everybody, a conviction that in each of them I can discover the mystery of some charming deeps. I feel myself as virtually united with everybody and on each concrete occasion this virtual and indirect union it will easily become actual and direct. And the love which I manifest for my fellow human it as well fills them up with its energy, and that has as consequence the coming back to me of that love and its propagation towards other fellow humans</p>	Love

	of theirs. The energy of the love descended from above it has the tendency of becoming a universal bond between people and God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 274-275)	
275	“The love for the fellow human it grows up out of the love for God and especially by living the love for God as ecstasy on the culminant level of the prayer, and the love for God it becomes easier to us by getting us accustomed to the love for our fellow humans. Our soul when filled up with love he behaves likewise towards God and towards all people. Our soul feels as being partaker to the universal “us”, as partner of God on each moment, and ready to become partner on each moment with one fellow human or another, in the bond of the actual or ecstatic love.” (Stăniloae 1992: 274-275)	Love
275	“In my rejoicing of you, in my love for you, which goes up to forgetting about my own self, in order to put you on the place of my own self, in the union between you and me, the human nature allotted in persons it overcomes its division and it finds itself in its unity, a fact that produces an overflowing joy. The allotting in persons it was and it still is necessary just for through the reciprocal love amongst them, the persons to unveil a value and a beauty which otherwise they couldn’t unveil.” (Stăniloae 1992: 274-275)	Personalism
275-276	“The discovered through love unity of the nature allotted in subjects it is differently valued, and that’s why it fuels up a ceaseless joy and affection. Binswanger says: ““We” achieved through love it is a sign, a salute, a call, a claim, embrace of	Love

	<p>the human existence in itself, with a word: meeting” (p. 70). We would rather call the encounter out of love, as “retrieval”. This is the sentiment experience by two human being who have opened their souls in love. The human nature retrieves through love its unity previously divided because of the sin. From here, the sentiment of the one who loves, that he finds his own “home” in the beloved one, after he was wandering outside. For the “home” is the interiority, the ultimate headquarters, the resting hearth, we can say that the man, as long as he is alone, even in state of “interiority”, he isn’t truly “at home” in himself, namely he still isn’t in his true “interiority”.” (Stăniloae 1992: 275-276)</p>	
276	<p>“The husband’s “home” is the place where his wife is, and the wife’s “home” is the place where her husband is, or better said the “home” is composed by both of them, as expression of the “us”.</p> <p>An edifice where the beloved one no longer lives, it has become deserted and proof that what was lending to it its character of “home” it was the presence of the beloved one. The one who love one another with the whole their heart, they open their heart to each other, namely their intimacy. This heat that is open to the beloved one it isn’t only the self-revealing of the subject in his infinite depths, but it is also the affection which this subject opens himself with in order to receive the other one.” (Stăniloae 1992: 276)</p>	Marriage
276-277	<p>“The joy we have for encountering god in love, it shows us</p>	Love

that here too is about retrieval. The human nature, by being the work of the creator love of God, it stays in a kinship and in an original closeness to Him. The union achieved through love gives us the sentiment of retrieval, of coming back “home”, of entering the resting, according to the word of Augustine: “Inquietum este cor nostrum donec requiescat in Te”. We have the sentiment that in the love for God as ecstasy, God has opened His heart as we have opened our heart to Him in order Him to enter our heart. On the other hand, the coming back to God, to His heart, it means entering His house. The “house” of God wants to comprise all the people, for in His heart can comprised everybody, and when I enter His heart, I must feel that I am there unified with all the ones from inside it. By coming back into God, we come back in the “Shelter-Person” of ours, in the supreme parental “house”, together with all the sons of the heavenly Father. Being in the same parental “house” with all the beloved ones, it is the highest and the purest structure of the love. We will see what this structure revealed to Moses like, in the image of the “tent” from above, according to which he made the tent, the temple, and the Church from below. In this “house”, which is God Himself, one can endlessly advance, without being him able to enter the God’s Being Himself, namely to enter the “altar” (the Holy of the Holies). But the ones who love one another they dwell in each other. Not only us enter God, but God too enter us. The drunkenness of the love for

	God, experienced at the end of the clean prayer, it fills me up with the impulse of loving all my fellow humans, of receiving all of them in my heart, which is in God's heart, the impulse of feeling that I am with everybody inside the same "house" of God, which is the Church." (Stăniloae 1992: 276-277)	
3. The Love, the Knowledge, and the Godlike Light		
a. The Role of the Mind in Seeing the Godlike Light		
277-278	<p>"The mind, after reaching the last levels of the prayer and of the thinking, at the spiritual image of Christ, it stops amazed in front of the divine indefinite, not remaining within mind except the love that has been gradually growing up through the man's zeal up to the limits of his powers. On this moment of amazed stop of any mental work, on this moment which the spirit feels the limit of the human powers on (Grenzsituation), the love from God descends upon the human spirit and it kidnaps the human spirit in ecstasy. This is exclusively godlike work. Our soul realizes that that experience isn't the product of some own effort. But this doesn't exclude the self-awareness and the awareness about the One Who the soul loves. This is for the soul in this awareness he sees in the same time his state of amazement, his helplessness of moving itself through efforts of understanding in the mysterious interior of the borderless which he feels. This will be the soul's state in the future life, a state lived here only for short period of time, and in much lower degrees. That stopping doesn't mean everywhere a ceasing of any activity from within mind,</p>	Knowledge

for now it is working there the Holy Ghost, and the mind is aware of His work and it perceives His work. The ones who have reached this state, they see, they know, they receive, they embrace joyfully the untold things. That's why, as Saint Gregory Palamas said, when exiting this state those people can communicate their experiences to others, and this removes the wrong idea that within their spirit everything has been stopped, or numbed: "And those one unveil, as much as it is possible, the untold things, for they are urged only and only by their love for their fellow human, in order to scatter away from the uninitiated believers the straying that after the removal of the ideas regarding the things, there takes place a total resting and not a resting that is above any resting" (*Word III, Triad I*, Gr. 100). This is for somehow the mind participates too, to that work, for there takes place "a giving and a receiving", according to the same Saint (*Ibid*). The holy Ghost gives them, and the mind received them. The previous stopping means only that the mind no longer unveils them by its work, but they are now being unveiled by the work of the Holy Ghost. So, the mind no longer modifies the receive things through its work, but the mind received them as they are. Even their receiving is done by the mind through the work of the Holy Ghost. We could say that just for that the mind know now the reality more truly, for the mind no longer modifies the reality through its own work. The mind no longer processes the knowledge, but the mind only receives the

	knowledge, namely it endures the knowledge. But this suffering it is life, as well.” (Stăniloae 1992: 277-278)	
278	“We must notice that the stopping of the mental activity, imposed by the descending within soul of the godlike work, it doesn’t make useless the whole mind’s endeavor from before of sharpening itself and of widening itself in ever thinner and more comprising understandings. This is for the exclusive work of God, inaugurate during the ecstasy moments from here and which will remain the only one in the future life, it is proportional to the state which the mind has reached with its effort at, namely it depends too on the purification of passions, without which the mind cannot become able to be elevated at the ecstatic love for God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 278)	Love
278	“The positive role in the experience which the mind receives after the stopping of the mental activity, it is presented by Saint Gregory Palamas and by Dionysus the Areopagite, by the fact that they attribute to it, in addition to the power of the natural activity directed towards the created things, also the power of entering the union with God, of accepting the union and of feeling the spiritual union with God. Of course, the feeling of this work is owed by the mind to the godlike work dwelling within mind. But an object couldn’t impropriate this spiritual feeling operated by God. The mind has the capacity of impropriating the godlike spiritual work as it would be of itself, namely the mind is <i>capax divini</i> , and this capacity has become actual out of virtual, through the	Union

	cleaning of the passions.” (Stăniloae 1992: 278)	
279	<p>“Even within mind there is a tendency of surpassing itself, namely of being surpasses the mind’s natural activity directed towards the real things and of being united with the One Who cannot be understood through this activity. Even if achieving this surpassing or this union it cannot actually be done by the mind by itself, because of not being able to have by its nature both a natural and a supra-natural activity, God, by elevating the human mind to the union with Himself, he still uses this capacity of the mind. (An icon: the human organism need air, but the air isn’t produced by this need of the human organism; but without the organism’s need for air, the air will vainly attempt to penetrate the man).” (Stăniloae 1992: 279)</p>	Union
279	<p>“Another reason highlighting the positive role of the mind in the union with God, in seeing the godlike light, it is the fact that the mind doesn’t receive from the beginning the same godlike light, but seeing that light it is a ceaseless process. This fact must depend on an endless widening of the mind’s power of seeing, of comprising, of impropriating the ever-higher understanding dwelling within mind as godlike work. We would say that if function is from above, but the subject of the function is, together with God, the mind. This means that not the human subject or organ produces this function, but this function comes from above, but the organ must previously be prepared, and to always grow up through its natural function, in order to be able to handle with more</p>	Seeing Godlike Unapproachable Light

	functional power what comes from above. According to the Holy Fathers the mind's report with the godlike light is analogue to the report between eye and sunlight, which it cannot see without, but in order to receive it the eye must be capable of, and in this sense the eye must be trained and it must continue training on the measure the eye receives the sunlight in an increasing quantity." (Stăniloae 1992: 279)	
b. The Signification of the Godlike Light		
279-280	<p>"What is the godlike light unveiled to the mind that reached the last levels of the prayer?</p> <p>That light is, from one point of view, just the smiling irradiation of the divine love, lived in a more intensive form during the moments of ecstatic focusing towards God." (Stăniloae 1992: 279-280)</p>	Seeing Godlike Unapproachable Light
280	<p>"During the moments of the ecstatic love are opened, by becoming loving and smiling to our sight, the deeps of the beloved subject. This is a knowledge above knowledge, after our subject or our mind has gone outside itself. During these moments we are sinking in the loving indefinite of His heart, and we forget about ourselves. But tries retrieval of the nature, in the loving "me-you" unity, if fill up both of us with an infinite joy. The face of the beloved one, which is no longer actually only a material image, it seems to us as filling up everything and out of that face it irradiates a charm and a light filling us up with light, as well. Who hasn't noticed that in ecstatic sight two human being are lightened in a smile?</p>	Love

	<p>We would say that the experience characterizing this state it can be expressed by three things: love, a knowing by experience above the conceptual knowing, and the light which is the expression of the joy. The spiritual light always is the expression of the subject who love one another. But this light is projected on the material plan too, and it makes this plan to be luminous as well. The reciprocal unveiling of the subjects by being the work of the love, it is equivalent to their luminous or smiling radiation.” (Stăniloae 1992: 280)</p>	
280	<p>“On the supreme level of the clean prayer, there appears the godlike light, a fact whose experience is described by the people who live it. That’s why, the love for God, the knowledge, and the light, are presented to us always as being in a tight connection. Sometimes the Holy Fathers speak only about two of these factors, but there always is presupposed the third factor too. Behold, for instance, a place from Saint Maximos the Confessor, where he spoke only about love and about the godlike light: “When the mind, carried away by the love’s eros, it leaves from within itself towards God, it no longer knows either about itself or about any other thing from amongst the existing things. This is for the mind being lightened by the godlike and infinite light, it no longer perceived the things created by Him, like the material eye no longer sees the stars when the sun starts raising up” (<i>Cap. De Char.</i>, I, 10; G.P. 90, 964). But just from here one can notice that the light which he spoke about it is knowledge in the</p>	Seeing Godlike Unapproachable Light

	same time, for its apparition is like the sun's apparition that makes the stars no longer possible to be perceived; in other words, while the mind is absorbed by the seeing of God, it no longer sees the created things." (Stăniloae 1992: 280)	
280	"The light is knowledge in the same time, and the light of the knowledge it is the fruit of the love. But a light of a knowledge that springs out of love, which isn't else but an expression of the state of love, it is life in the same time." (Stăniloae 1992: 280)	Seeing Godlike Unapproachable Light
281	"The knowledge understood as life, as life in love, it has an existential character. It is not only a part of the life, or something stranger and opposed to life, as often it appears to us on the plan from here, but it is the life itself. "This is the eternal life: they to know You, the One, the True God" (Jn. 13: 3). Wanting to highlight the existential character of this experienced in love knowledge, Saint Maximos the Confessor compared it to the fire's warmth, felt by the body in a material manner, unlike the knowledge through the faith without love, whose content isn't being lived, but it is at distance, and he compares is to the imagined or remembered fire: "Like the memory of the fire doesn't warm the body up, likewise the faith without love doesn't work within soul the light of the knowledge" (<i>Cap. de char.</i> I, 9)." (Stăniloae 1992: 281)	Knowledge
281	"The mind on its road towards itself, through prayer, when looking at itself it directly intuitis the closeness of God. And then, the mind stops for a moment, amazed, from any	Seeing Godlike Unapproachable Light

	activity; later, the divine love descending from above as a fire upon a sacrifice and passively placed as on a altar in front of the unseen God, it kidnaps the mind out of itself and it takes the mind beyond the darkness wall which hides God from the people as long as their mind advances only by its efforts. The mind which no longer sees even on itself, and which now works not by its work but exclusively by the godlike work, it has penetrated the zone of the godlike light irradiating from the inward bosom of the divine Subject, or of the Holy Trinity.” (Stăniloae 1992: 281)	
282	“While during the prayer the mind is still aware of itself as somehow separated from God, and it doesn’t see God, but it only feels His presence in shadow, as the One Whose grace the mind’s own subject exists through, in other words, while during the prayer the mind sees directly on itself and only indirectly sees God, once it is kidnaped out of itself it sees God directly and it is no longer is aware of itself. This is the experience of the love during the ecstasy moments: I am no longer seeing myself but I only see you; you are taking, in the horizon of my sight, the place of my own self. Actually, the godlike like is considered as being a reflection of the loving face of God, or of the faces who love each other and loves us, of the Holy Trinity. Where one can see light, there God is no longer covered in shadow, His presence is no longer only suspected, but He has unveiled His face which irradiates the light. “The light of His glory, said Saint Simeon the New	Seeing God

	<p>Theologian, it goes before His face and it is impossible that He to appear otherwise than in light. The ones who haven't seen this light, they haven't seen God, for God is light" (<i>Homily LXXIX, 2</i>).” (Stăniloae 1992: 282)</p>	
282-283	<p>“The mind’s exit out of itself couldn’t have been accomplished if God hadn’t got out of Himself too; neither could have been seen His deeps of mystery, as light. This fact is illustrated, analogically again, by the moment of the ecstatic love between two human beings. If the beloved being doesn’t open himself in a smile, but he remains closed, the unifier ecstasy of the love won’t be achieved. The lack of light on his face is a sign that he wants to remain closed, it is a sign that he doesn’t come out of himself, or he doesn’t receive the another in himself. At people the ecstasy is achieved through a reciprocal getting out of one towards another, a getting out that can also be called as ascension, as also the getting out to welcome a beloved one it can also be called descent, and the actual entering within another, when he opens himself too, it can be called as ascension. But god’s getting out of Himself, in order to receive the man, it is a kenotic descent. God must open Himself to us through love, in order us to be able to enter and to see Him. If God had remained closed in Himself, we couldn’t have entered at Him. At us, the closing into ourselves it is egotism, and that’s why it is an unnatural state. To God though, His descend to people isn’t necessary and the absence of this descent it isn’t egotism, for God has a life of</p>	Love

	Love and of light in the inter-Trinitarian reports. That's why when a man gets out to welcome somebody through love, what he does isn't only a gift but it is also an internal need for fulfillment. The descent of God to man, through love, it is a exclusively a gift. That's why the divine love for man it is something else than a necessity of the God's being; it is only a benevolent work of His. Consequently, our union with God in love it isn't a union imposed by His being; if it had been so, this would have lowered God on our level, in a pantheistic sense." (Stăniloae 1992: 282-283)	
283	"The love which God receives us with, and the love which we receive God with, it isn't the existential love which the divine Hypostases love one another with, but this love still is an uncreated love, springing out of the God's being. Therefore, neither the opinion of Peter the Lombard won't be correct, because he said that we love God with God's love, if we will understand through the "God's love" the love which God love us with, and not simply the love from God; nor the opinion of Thomas d-Aquino is correct, according to which our love for God is created." (Stăniloae 1992: 283)	Theology
283-284	"By opening us the access towards His interior, God doesn't give us His being, but he gives us only His work. That's why we do not become gods according to the being. God descends to the man in two meanings, though simultaneously. Through one descent He places within us the work of the love for Him, and through another He opens Himself in front of our love,	Love

	that love from Him, which is now searching for Him. Firstly, God love us with such a love that He makes us loving Him too. Firstly, God searches for our heart, in order us too, to try after to enter at Him. About the second descend of God from Himself Saint Gregory Palamas said: “Our mind gets out of itself and so it is filled up with God, and so the mind becomes above itself. And God, at His turn, he gets out of Himself and so He unites Himself with our mind, but He descends. He gets out as driven by love and by the abundance of His kindness, but no living His deep, not getting out of Himself, out of His transparence, and He unites Himself with us through than above mind union” (<i>Word III, Triad I</i>).” (Stăniloae 1992: 283-284)	
284	“This descent having as effect the mind’s kidnapping from the relations with the created things and out of the order of its natural activity, on the divine’s transcendent plan, it isn’t actually a descent, but it means attracting the seer inside the darkness that separates the divine transcendence from the order of the created things. It is a descent only for it is a benevolence for elevating in His bosom a created mind.” (Stăniloae 1992: 284)	Love
284-285	“Neither the mind’s getting out of itself is a so-called an existential one. This getting out means that the mind no longer looks at itself directly, but it intensely looks beyond itself. Some kind of mind’s getting out of itself, it is the looking at the external objects too. But while this last one is a	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	<p>getting outside, the first one is getting out of itself while still remain inside. This last getting out means that the mind doesn't lock itself up in self-contemplation. But this means also forsaking its natural work and replacing it for the godlike work. This getting out in both senses it is achieved in the union of the mind with the godlike light seen by the mind. By seeing through the light of the divine love descended in the mind, and by looking at that light coming out of God and reflected upon and within mind, this fills the mind up by making it light too. The one who looks at a light that irradiates on the face of the beloved one he is filled up with that light too. The light and the brightness from the face of the beloved one extends also on the face of the one who loves, engulfing both of them in a common light and joy, which, in time, by being imprinted in their looks and in their traits, it makes them alike." (Stăniloae 1992: 284-285)</p>	
c. Seeing the Light and the Self-Looking of the Mind		
285	<p>"The mind sees the godlike light not only beyond itself, but it sees it also within itself. From beyond the mind that light extends within mind too. Only the mind's intention must be to look not at itself but at something that is above mind and beyond mind, in order to be able to see that one even in itself. We would say that while the mind was looking at itself, it was directly seeing itself and it was seeing God only indirectly, now the mind sees Him directly, or in union with Him the mind sees itself too. The mind, by looking at God and by</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	<p>forgetting about itself, in the same time it realizes the happiness that fills the mind up, a happiness coming from God, and this happiness is the light which the mind feels it in itself, though the mind isn't directly preoccupied with itself. By getting out of itself, the mind has gone or it has allowed to be taken into God, but by looking at God and by seeing Him as light the mind sees itself as filled up with light. This is what Saint Gregory Palamas wanted to say through the words: "the mind sees on itself as on something else". (Stăniloae 1992: 285)</p>	
286	<p>"It is right what Lossky says that seeing the godlike light it means a growing up of the self-awareness, or, better said, it is the supreme level of self-awareness, as the unconsciousness or the "soul's sleep" it is a sign of the sin. "If the life in sin, he says, it is sometimes voluntarily unconscious (one closes his eyes in order to not see God), the life in grace is a ceaseless progress of the conscience an increasing experience of the godlike light" (<i>quoted work</i>, p. 216). Without being only that much, the godlike light is that too. And this self-awareness is in the same time a conscience of the own smallness, or vice versa: the humbleness means self-awareness, while the pride it is the absence of the self-awareness." (Stăniloae 1992: 286)</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light
286-287	<p>"The mind's self-looking at itself, not as one that has own content but as one empties of all things, through which transparent walls it has penetrated the godlike light and that its have been lightened, it confirms the truth that what the</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	<p>mind sees is, in the first place, that light. Even by seeing on himself, the mind still is in tension towards what the mind isn't, namely towards the godlike light, which fills the mind up and lightens it. By seeing itself only as a reflector of the godlike light, which doesn't put in front of the sight anything of its own content, and by having even the conscience that the power which it sees with, and even the sight function, they belong to God, the mind not being except the subject imparted with sight, the mind is, in the same time with seeing itself, in an act of self-surpassing. In these conditions, the mind's own sight doesn't lock the mind up on a plan of subjectivity, but it keeps it beyond itself, though this beyond has even penetrated within mind, but without identifying with the mind, or the mind has wholly penetrated this beyond. Thus, by looking at God the mind sees on itself, or by looking at itself the mind sees God, without being confounded, like I by looking at you on the love's ecstasy moment I am seeing myself in you too, for I has surpassed myself by penetrating within you, or by looking within myself I am seeing you, for you fill me up and you imprint me entirely." (Stăniloae 1992: 286-287)</p>	
d. The Spirituality of the Godlike Light		
287	<p>"The light one sees while he is in ecstasy, at the end of the clean prayer, it isn't a physical, light, but it is a spiritual light, seen inside. Saint Gregory Palamas highlights this fact widely. He reckons that this light it is that light that irradiates</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	eternally out of the presence of Jesus Christ, and this light dresses up the souls of the righteous after their death.” (Stăniloae 1992: 287)	
288	“How could not be that light above senses and above mind once it is shown only after ceasing any natural activity of the human spirit?” (Stăniloae 1992: 288)	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light
289	“This light, though isn’t a sensitive light, though it is a spiritual light, it spreads from within soul towards outside, over the face and over the body of the one who has it within. Who doesn’t know that a joy from within soul it fills up the face and the eyes with a light which differs from the physical light produces by the sun irradiations? “So shined the face of Moses by the inwards light of his mind that was overflowing over his body too” (Word III, Triad I). So, the light from on the face of Moses shined so brightly, so that the ones who were looking at him weren’t even able to look at that overwhelming light. So looked the sensitive face of Stephen, as an angel’s face” (<i>Ibid</i>). There is a difference between the spreading of that light on the faces of the ones who see it into their ghost, and the light itself as seen by them. If the spreading of that light on their face happened to be seen also by the ones who weren’t elevated to a state above the natural activity of their mind, namely through the natural power of their eyes, that light itself, shown in the ghost of the ones elevated above themselves, even if it was seen with the bodily eyes too, wasn’t seen through the natural power of the eyes but	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	<p>through the power of the Holy Ghost Who was working both through their mind and eyes. So, if the reflection of the godlike light spread over the face of some saints in ecstasy can be seen by anyone, the godlike light itself cannot be seen by anyone. For instance, the light on the night of the Savior's Birth wasn't seen by the eyes of the animals, and the light on Mount Tabor – though was shining stronger than sun -, so that anybody could have seen it wherever somebody was, only the three Apostles could see it for within them was working the power of the Holy Ghost. So, even if that light can be seen by the sensitive eyes too, because of not being that light seen with the natural power of the eyes, it is not a sensitive light.” (Stăniloae 1992: 289)</p>	
d. Seeing the Godlike Light is a Knowledge above Knowledge		
290	<p>“Being of spiritual order, being a light filling up the mind, this light is a self-unveiling of the mysterious reality of God. That's why this light is often given names borrowed from the knowledge's paradigm. But, in the same time, by exceeding everything that the mind can know through its natural work, this light surpasses the knowledge by being above man. This is a knowledge above anything we can experience within the limits of our natural power of knowing. This is a knowledge we couldn't ever reach by the power of our spirit, no matter how much they would be developed, no matter how much they would evolve, because of no evolution can allow to mind to unite itself with God Who is transcendent to creation</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	and to mind's powers. By calling this result of the mind's union with God as knowledge, Palamas calls also the sight of the godlike light as "nescience", but not because there would lack the minimum of science but because it exceeds the maximum of knowledge; not because it is an absence of any intelligibility but because of exceeding the maximum of intelligibility which the mind can reach and comprise." (Stăniloae 1992: 290)	
291-292	"The sight of this light cannot by any means to be framed in the conception of the pantheistic idealism (Plato, Plotinus, Hegel). This light isn't a natural coronation of an effort of the spirit, or a consequence of the development of the spirit's powers. One reached this light by a jump, a jump which the mind doesn't do it by its own powers, but by being kidnapped by the Holy Ghost. So, we can say that that sight doesn't represent only a quantitative plus in that nature in addition to the knowledge achieved by the efforts of the human spirit, but it is also a qualitative superiority, a "Ganz Anderes", likewise everywhere the divine energies aren't only a quantitative plus added to the energies of the created world, a plus obtained through amplification, but they are totally different, and we must deny the energies of the created world in order to take the crossing step to understanding the uncreated energies. Seeing the godlike like being a sight and a knowledge of a godlike energy, these sight and understanding being received by man through a godlike energy, they are a	Uncreated Divine Energies

	<p>sight and a knowledge according to the divine mode, and the man sees and know now qualitatively, as God sees and knows, or “spiritually and in a godlike manner”, as Palamas said (<i>The Romanian Philokalia</i>, volume VII, p. 328), and there being possible, from quantitative point of view, an infinite progress in this knowledge about god. But one must apply to such a knowledge, in order to indicate it somewhat correctly, both positive and negative names, as to all divine energies, not to mention here the divine being. So, this knowledge has, related to the usual categories and terms, an apophatic character, but not by its minus in comparison to the usual human knowledge, but by its quantitative and qualitative plus. (...) Our helplessness of framing this knowledge in the categories and in the terms of any possible natural knowledge, it mustn’t make us understand the apophatic character of this experience as unfavorable to its positive character.” (Stăniloae 1992: 291-292)</p>	
e. Seeing the Godlike Light is a Supra-Conceptual Knowledge		
292	<p>“Seeing the godlike light is superior to the knowledge, and it can be appropriately called even as nescience, and not only because by being received from the Holy Ghost it represents a quantitative and qualitative plus exceeding any possible knowledge of our natural capacities, but also because of not being a knowledge in concepts.” (Stăniloae 1992: 292)</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light
292-293	<p>“Neither the subject of a human “you”, who unveils himself to me in the love’s ecstasy, I cannot comprise him in concepts.</p>	Tropes: Comparison

	<p>The knowledge of the ecstasy moments is superior to concepts, by being a direct and wider sight of what the indefinite subject is in comparison to the concepts which are like some tea spoons in comparison to a river or to a sea. That's why the experience of such a reality it resembles rather to a sight, to an ascertainment, to a union, for its character of direct and non-discursive contact with the reality of the untold and supreme Person. This is the reason why the Holy Fathers preponderantly call this knowledge as "sight", and what it is known as "light" it is something that can be directly seen, something that spread light by its presence. The clean prayer has brought my mind in the closeness of the divine subject, for in an instant the eros from above to kidnap me and to place me in ecstatic, unmediated contact with Him. This direct presence, or this experiencing of His unmediated presence it appears to me as light that fills up everything." (Stăniloae 1992: 292-293)</p>	
293	<p>"L. Binswanger speaks about the knowledge through love, which is an infinite knowledge of the entire "you", and the defined knowledge of some parts of "you" that takes place when I want to define you and to subordinate you to my cogitation, when, by annulling the " me-you" report, or the state of "us", I leave the communion and the getting out of myself (the ecstasy), in order to enter back in myself and to draw you too in the sphere of my egotistic self, by transforming you in an object. The first one, by not knowing</p>	Tropes: Oxymoron

	<p>the reality of “something”, as object, it isn’t actually even knowledge, because of receiving a revealing of the fundamental personal reality in its quality as concealment and intimacy. It is actually a nescient knowledge. Only the second one is actually knowledge, for “the knowledge is only a knowing possession of something, as something” (Max Scheler). This type of knowledge, by wanting to possess the other one, it transforms him in an object. But his own subject escapes from under this will, and what remain in the hands of the one who wants to know him in a conceptually defined mode, there are only the veils, or only strips of veils, as in the happening between Joseph and Potiphar’s wife.” (Stăniloae 1992: 293)</p>	
293	<p>“By loving you, I am experiencing you beyond any feature specified in concepts. When the love stops, I remain with your features; when I am loving you, I am not seeing except the light from within you and not the shadows too. I will see your features when I start judging upon your features.” (Stăniloae 1992: 293)</p>	Love
294	<p>“On that moment when I encounter you as a whole, you are light to me. When this ecstatic relation ceases, I have remained with a few superficial bits of you, cast in the concepts’ drawers. The smile that light two persons on the moment they look at one another with love, it is the joy of the nature to find itself again in its intimacy, overcoming the allotting in different hypostases, or just because of that, for</p>	Love

	only thus it can be the love manifested in the nature. It is the joy of the nature in one person for encountering itself in another person. It is the joy produced by the awareness about this encounter, or by the awareness about the unity in love, or of the unity reflected and enriched in two consciences. Any human creature living a normal existence it reflects a certain light.” (Stăniloae 1992: 294)	
294	“In its normalness the being is harmony and the harmony irradiated light. But on the normalness of a being it depends its integrity too, in the ensemble of the existence. That’s why we call the ensemble of the things form outside us as world, for the fact that it appeared to our ancestors as light (Lat.: <i>lumen</i> , E. l. t.’s. n.). The darkness is caused by non-existence, or by a disorder, and therefore by a weakening of the being. We do not know the darkness except as night. About disorder we know that it is a sufferance in existence, and the existence appears to be diminished, or mixed with the darkness, or as false light. From within that being it seems to flow out a darkness that stings, and it wounds the usual light.” (Stăniloae 1992: 294)	World
294	“A great disorder within the human beings and amongst them it is the passionate division brought by sin. The people with enmity are darkened: the light of the simulate friendship it is a false light. Only the living of the unity through love it opens the springs of light chocked in its deep. My concepts about you as concepts of the self, putting a distance between me	Sin

	and you, or a separation, they are a sign of the absence of the love.” (Stăniloae 1992: 294)	
294	“While the created being irradiates light, how much brighter will be the light irradiated by the divine being, inexhaustible in existence and in perfect Trinitarian communion. His perfect union and His infinite being, lived by the perfect love amongst the three Persons, it irradiates light not only amongst Them (“light out of light”), but also towards the conscious created beings, but this is a light that can be seen only by the ones who, through the prayer and through the cleanness of the love, they ceaselessly ask for Him to unveils Himself to them in love; this is for this sight means also the culminant union in love with the Trinitarian communion.” (Stăniloae 1992: 294)	Union
294	“The coming back of the human being, through love, in the report of intimacy with God, based on the original kinship, it takes place in the same time with the unification of the human being in himself. And this fills the human being too, with light.” (Stăniloae 1992: 294)	Union
294-295	“The smile of God and the smile of man, when God and the man encounter one another in the love’s ecstasy, these smiles fill everything up with light. That’s why the encounter with god is experienced as light. Only when we do not have this unmediated experience of God, our mind conceives concepts as surrogates to this experience. But the one who takes a concept of God as the reality of God, he makes an idol to	Union

	himself. And the result is his spiritual death, as Saint Gregory of Nyssa interprets the word: “Won’t the man see My face and to be alive” (Exod. 33: 20).” (Stăniloae 1992: 294-295)	
295	“There must be harmonized the apparent contradiction between the insistent recommendation of the Holy Fathers not to consider as godlike any apparition of light, with the other affirmation that the grace of God fills our soul up with light (Diadochus, <i>The Romanian Philokalia</i> , vol. I, p. 355). The apparitions which we must look at with mistrust are the defined “forms”, the defined images, be it even luminous; as such can be considered even the light bearing the features of the physical world, or closed between some margins. But the light that fills the mind up and which overflows from the mind over all things, light which we realize about that it has a spiritual character, or evidence, of joy, of universal holyday, it no longer is a defined shape, an idol, but it is rather a “feeling” and an “understanding” spread within the whole our being (a mental “felling” as it was called by: Diadochus, Isaac the Syrian, Simeon the New Theologian, Gregory Palamas), produced not by a subjective state but by the presence or by the experience of the godlike presence.” (Stăniloae 1992: 295)	Light
295	“Saint Gregory of Nyssa considered that any concept or definite image, when taken as God, it is causing spiritual death also by the fact that it stops the mind’s desire of tending always higher in order to get increasingly closer to God. The divine being is above anything that can be known in	Idol

	a definite manner, and this is one more reason why it upholds the life as tension, as spiritual progress in man.” (Stăniloae 1992: 295)	
296	“Not only the godlike being is borderless but so it is also the light irradiated by the godlike being, as existential being of Him. That’s why this light isn’t a definite form and it doesn’t stop the longing of the one who sees it for seeing increasingly more of it. This is for the seer has the certitude of not seeing everything, that the divine reality is much more than he sees and, no matter how much he would progress, he won’t ever reach to know it wholly. Thus, Palamas spoke about the “ceaseless advancing of the angels and of the saints into the endless age, to ever clearer sights” and he concluded: “so, by seeing, even by my sight I know that that light is above sight; all the more I know God Who shows Himself through that light” (<i>Word III</i>).” (Stăniloae 1992: 296)	Knowing God
296-297	“When the seer of the godlike light descends from his state of ecstasy, he strives to catch in concepts and in images what he has seen, but he also realizes that he cannot catch except little pieces from what he has seen. That’s why he expresses himself in contradictory concepts (seeing and not-seeing, knowledge and nescience etc.). So, that light is supra-conceptual, but it suggests concepts and images, accompanied by the awareness about their transparency, or of their symbolic character. The indefinite of the loved subject or the infinity of the divine light doesn’t occasion us simply	Seeing God

	<p>the experience of the void, which is caused to us by the indetermination of the nothingness, but is occasions us the experience of a fullness which – as long as we stay under its power – we do not know where to catch it, for we do not have what to catch. That’s why Saint Gregory of Nyssa himself, who, as we have seen, accentuated so much the indefinite of the godhead experienced in the divine darkness by Moses, as prototype of any soul that has been cleaned up of passions, he then mentions that in that darkness he received the suggestion of the tent with all its details.” (Stăniloae 1992: 296-297)</p>	
f. The Concept and the Structure of the Love. The Immaterial Tent		
297	<p>“Maybe this sight of the divine mysteries as looked in their immateriality and simplicity through the transparence of the spiritual light it comes out of the fact that that light is experienced not as a dull uniformity, or as a luminous chaos, but as an implicit plenitude. A pale analogy offers us the loving relationship between two persons. In this experience the beloved subject, no matter how indefinite would seem, it appears to me as a harmony of infinite spiritual and personal richness.” (Stăniloae 1992: 297)</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light
297	<p>“This makes possible that in God to be contemplated as eternally involved the rationalities of all the existences and it explains the necessity of previously knowing those rationalities in a distinct manner, in order to make the mind capable of increasingly advancing in knowing God as bosom</p>	Knowing God

	of these rationalities.” (Stăniloae 1992: 297)	
297-298	<p>“Binswanger noticed that the reality of “us” achieved through love it has a certain organization at its turn, which the two subjects are aware of, or, in other terms, each subject experience the other subject as having a full of harmony richness, with the whole his indefinite. He called this organization or harmony as “structure” (Gestalt). For instance, in another manner it is organized the experience of the structure of “us” in love and otherwise it is the experience of the same “us” as simple association of interests, or as collision of contradictions, when we no longer experience a so-called unitary “us”, but a ‘me” and a “you”, or a “me” against “you”.” (Stăniloae 1992: 297-298)</p>	Love
298	<p>“The “structure” isn’t yet a concept, but it is the seed of the concepts. The structure is a form of the living, of the experience, upon which, by being reflected, the concepts are born.</p> <p>Some analogue structures characterize also the experience of the one who sees the divine light, or who has the feeling of the effective and loving presence of Jesus Christ. The one who sees the divine light he experiences it in the most general mode, as a vast infinite, intimate and holy shelter of the love, that covers him up, that receives him in inside, by comprising everything, in the same time unitarily and simply, in His love. Maybe that’s why Saint Gregory Palamas said that, like Moses, the one who enters the zone of the godlike light he</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	<p>feels himself as covered up by it, as brought out from the scattering that weakens his being, and as hidden from the sight of the ones who remain outside. In this manner is structured the loving relation between him and the godlike light, or this is the form taken by his experience. The more he advances in light, the more he feels that he advances in a holy temple, in a loving intimacy, but that the light will also eternally remain a hidden deep where all the light starts from, and all the love, as an infinite mysterious source, that makes possible an infinite progress of our knowledge, of the love between us and Christ. Thus, the godlike light is lived as a temple with several parts, starting from outside and ending in the “Holy of the Holies”, and in the intimacy of the divine being, that is the hidden eternally locked in the mystery’s darkness, where start in an endless procession from, the waves of light and of love, one after another, as out of an altar, that seems to the believers from the church’s nave as sunk in darkness, but where the glitters of the torches start from, spreading their playful light within nave.” (Stăniloae 1992: 298)</p>	
298-299	<p>“That’s why it is said in Exodus that Moses, by entering the divine darkness, he saw the archetype of the divine tent. Saint Gregory of Nyssa affirmed for several times that whosoever enters the godlike light he has the experience of entering the not-made-by-human-hand tent of the godhead, Who is the eternal Son of the Father, the wisdom and the power of God.</p>	The Tent

	<p>Just this Holy Father who forbade the man to liken God to some concept of the known things, or to some imagining of the human fantasia, he said that after Moses purified his life, he “entered the not-made-by-human-hand tent”, seemingly wanting to indicate that this structure seen by Moses it hasn’t a unilaterally theoretical character, but it is an existential living of the divine intimacy by the whole man, by being an experience and not a theoretical knowledge, a structure of the love and not a concept. This ascension of the man doesn’t mean only a progress in God but in the man himself too, the man becoming ever higher than himself. Like Saint Gregory Palamas, Saint Gregory of Nyssa highlighted that entering the not-made-by-human-hand temple it isn’t simply apophatism, but it is a positive seeing and a living in a reality superior to any knowledge.” (Stăniloae 1992: 298-299)</p>	
299-300	<p>“Under the general shape of a tent, which comprise everything that exist, as Saint Gregory of Nyssa said, the Apostle Paul saw at his turn the heavenly mysteries which is not forgiven to the man to utter. In this tent we will be fully shelter in the future life, when our seen tent will be undone – namely this body – and we will be dressed up in the not-made-by-human-hand-house form heavens, namely in Christ. This is “the larger and the most consummate tent, not-made-by-human-hand, namely not belonging to this creation”, in which Holy of the Holies entered Christ only for once, namely it is the godhead which Christ entered fully entered as man, as our</p>	The Tent

	Fore-Runner. It is the One begotten Word of God “in Whom have been built up all the seen and the unseen things, either thrones, or chieftains, or masteries, of dominions, or power” (Col. 1:16).” (Stăniloae 1992: 299-300)	
300	“The heavenly tent which we will dressed up in, in the future life, it cannot be except the hypostatic and all-comprising and also all-loving, Wisdom of God, for Apostle Paul called the body That One took as His “iconostasis”, which we will enter the infinity of His godhead through. Saint Gregory of Nyssa reckons, by and large, the body as “iconostasis of the tent from below”. So, our soul would be the lower tent, made in the image of the tent from above, for – in the likeness of the Logos into Whom are comprised from ever all the thing’s rationalities and at the end so will be all the creatures – it is destined at its turn to embrace with love the rationalities and the images of everybody, but not as their existential source, but as receiver. But in another place, Saint Apostle Paul called the body itself as “tent”, which would want not to be separated from but we would want to put the other body on, over this one, “for what it is mortal to be swallowed up by life” (II Cor. 5: 4). This is because nothing from our being, and therefore neither the body, it will be lost, but it will be overwhelmed by light and it is shown as light.” (Stăniloae 1992: 300)	The Tent
300	“Either through the “tend from below” it is understood only the body, or the only soul, of it is understood the whole man	The Tent

	<p>composed of soul and body – and this is more probable -, the fact is that like our tent from below will once put on the tent from above, likewise the tent from above has put on the tent from below, being shown by this a conformity between the two tents. The purpose on which the tent from above accepted to put on a tent from below it was His will of restoring and consolidating this tent from below which entered the process of collapsing. Better said, by these there haven't been combined two tents, but one and the same uncreated and eternal tent has made Himself as created too, for Christ is a sole tent, created and uncreated, in His quality as unique divine-human Person. To the same purpose of consolidation and restoration and full achievement in an eternal existence of the tent from below, it serves also the putting on of the tent from above, by entering the light, in the life from here for short periods of time, and forever and fully in the future life. Properly-said, by entering us the light it is being consummated the work started through creation, a fact that starts with the descending of the "Light" within world, where the Light lightens as in a darkness that doesn't comprised it yet. (Stăniloae 1992: 300)</p>	
301	<p>"The purpose of the "Light", of the tent from above, it is that of penetrating and gathering together again the ones who got out. This work starts through the descent of the Light on earth, as Embodiment, it continues through Resurrection and it is accomplished for each man when he ascends to seeing it,</p>	The Tent

	<p>when he enters the tent from above, at the end of his purification. Through this, the light of the created conscience enters the uncreated and all-luminous "Light", or the "Life" and the "Conscience", being penetrated by Him. What we have actually weakened by getting out of the tent from above it is our full "being", the power of existing and lighting eternally. By being gathered again in Him our power of existing and lighting is being restored. Everything that exist can exist and it can lighten only for it remains inside the "house" lightened, being nourished out of the source of the existence and of the light coming out of it; what comes out of it, it comes in the sphere of the existence of the endless light. Our tent from below will be restored, it will be consolidated, and it will be lightened forever only if it penetrates the true existence and light, or if the true existence penetrates it. "And this true existence is God the One Begotten, Who comprises in Himself all the things and Who has set within us His own tent".</p> <p>This is the great mystery Moses saw before this mystery being accomplished, and this is too the great mystery experienced by any purified mind that penetrates the light, after it has been accomplished." (Stăniloae 1992: 301)</p>	
301	<p>"The man's ascension towards God it starts within Church and it end within Church. Within Church begins and ends the action of man's consummation; within Church starts and ends the man forever, advancing towards the endless ages from within Church, the Church itself being the bosom of</p>	The Tent

	<p>God. Starting and remaining in the seen Church, the man ascends on the Church's unseen levels, as in a seen tent ascending on the stairs of the unseen tent, and this won't be else but one and the same, if us, by putting us the unseen tent we do not disrobe the seen tent, but the unseen one being placed over the seen one it penetrates the last one increasingly more. That's why, the Saints do not leave the Church, but they are on the highest levels of the Church and of their life in God." (Stăniloae 1992: 301)</p>	
301	<p>"The man doesn't feel himself "at home" while being alone, even if he is in the edifice where he has been inhabiting for a long time. His "home" is where his beloved being or beings are, it is the place of together-living of the ones forming a spiritual family. Finding his "house" again, or finding again the beloved beings, the spiritual family, it gives him a infinite or undefined sentiment of resting. This is one of the structures of an experience which doesn't lose its infinity or indefinite." (Stăniloae 1992: 301)</p>	Resting
302	<p>"An analogue sentiment, infinitely more infinite, of retrieval, of resting, of happiness, of coming "home", must be structuring also the experience of seeing the godlike light, or of entering the heavenly tent, which gather all the things to the supreme Parent. The one who has entered that light he feels his intimate and loving dwelling into Christ. In the same time, he realizes that he isn't alone with Christ, but everybody is there, and therefore an infinite love for everybody and for everything,</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	it fills his soul up. He must experience the light as an endless wave of love which, starting from Christ and from all the ones being into Him, it attracts him inside it, in the same time overflowing within him.” (Stăniloae 1992: 302)	
302	<p>“Describing all the structures which shape the experience of the ones found worthy of seeing the godlike light it is not given but to them. We notice, by and large, that those structures must be endless and unspeakable nuanced, constantly progressing in their nuancing, and each of them having in the same time an infinite depth and being in a consummate unity with all the things. In this way is explained, on one hand, the fact that the ones coming back from such experiences are able to tell other so many things about God and about His will, or that such supra-conceptual experiences are inexhaustible sources for theirs and others spiritual enrichment; on the other hand, that in the future life we will be contemplating eternally in God, accompanied by endlessly new experiences, the rationalities of all the things, in a consummate unity. For these structures follow a certain progress, being taken in account the measure which the man becomes able on, for increasingly high-quality structures, this fact it also explains their necessity in order to sharpen the mind and to purify the heart during the life, through and for knowing increasingly satisfyingly the rationalities of the things. Thus, the man’s moral and intellectual endeavor during his life on earth and by and large the creation with its</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	<p>rationalities and with the relations imposed by creation, it seems to us as not having only a passing role but as having an eternal value. So, we will be with the rationalities of the things, we will benefit forever, being consummate by the moral and intellectual endeavors from on earth.” (Stăniloae 1992: 302)</p>	
302-303	<p>“No matter how useful would be the idea of such structures, we wouldn’t have dared to impropriate it in order to clarify with its help some aspects of the experience of seeing the godlike light, if we wouldn’t have discovered in it the modern formulation of one of the ideas of Saint Gregory Palamas, developed in connection with a few texts from Dionysus the Areopagite. At this one we find, instead of the term “structure”, that one of “imprinted image”, or “to imprint and image”. It is about an immaterial, incorporeal imprinting, of the mind as the most spiritual man’s part, but also of our entire being, being different from the imagination’s imprinting. But what can be this shaping which even the angels are submitted to, if not our continuously new structuring, of spiritual nature, which we have tried to clarify before? Unlike Barlaam who didn’t admit except the imprinting of sensitive images, Saint Gregory Palamas specifies: “But the godlike imprinting differs much from our human imagination. Namely, this is imprinted in our truly intellectual and bodiless part. But the human imagination unfolds in a part of the soul that is close to the body. The</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	<p>matter which the imprinting is being done there on, it is the highest part of the soul, while here is almost the last part of the soul's powers. The imprinting is being done here by the senses' movements; there, if you want Who is the One making the imprinting in the prophets' understanding, listen to the Great Basil who says: "The prophets understood for the Holy Ghost was the One imprinting their understanding". Thus, the Holy Ghost is the One Who stays upon the mind of the prophets' mind and, by using the understanding as a substance, He foretells though Himself the future things and, through prophets to us too. How could be this imprinting, simply, of the same kind and of the same honor with our imagination?" And Palamas concludes: "So, it is about sights which aren't either sensitive or imagined, but they are something totally different than the knowledge by cogitation" (<i>Word III, poster. Triad</i>).” (Stăniloae 1992: 302-303)</p>	
305	<p>“The apparent contradiction between the insistence which the Holy Father demand the mind to reject any images any concept which shape the mind, if the mind wants to know God, and the affirmation that God gives the mind some imprinting, it cannot be solved except in the following manner: the images and the concepts shaped according to the created things give the mind a limited shape, which doesn't allow the mind to become habituated to this at the borderless God. That's why the mind must leave all the images and concepts as finite shapes and to accustom itself to think at</p>	Knowing God

the indefinite reality, doing this exercise firstly by focusing upon itself as subject of the cogitation. In this way the mind removes its limits. But the new experience the mind has regarding the realities which limits have been removed (the mind itself, the people's subjects, and especially God) it has its organization, and at its turn is lived in the form of some structures. It is the expression of the love from God and of the love for God, the experience of the greatness of God and of the own humbleness, the experience of the joy and of the happiness. These structured no longer squash it in the finite form of the images and concepts, for each of these structures is limitless and infinite. God is experienced as personal and loving dwelling place without the feeling of His infinity being excluded; the resting, which is another structure experienced by us into God, it is lived at its turn as happy resting in the infinity of God's love. Amongst others, the structured experienced in the loving relationship between two beings, they fill them up with happiness just by the fact that, by not feeling the limits of the feelings which they live, these ones do not make them worry at all because of coming to an end. In this way it is reconciled the contradiction that, on one hand, the mind must leave the finite shapes in order to live God, and on the other hand God imprints the mind with His infinite shapes. These shapes have an existential character in the sense that they shape the entire being of the man, in the sense that the man experienced these shapes as forms of

	existential and inexhaustible relation between him and God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 305)	
305-306	“The forms of the relations between man and God, though offering at the beginning the experience of the infinite, they do not remain unchanged, but they are always progressing on the measure which the union between the human subject and God it becomes increasingly tighter, increasingly intimate, as God becomes more inwardly and as the human subject has become more capable of receiving God. This is the ceaseless shaping of the man by the Holy Ghost Who makes the man increasingly in God’s likeness. But the ontological distance between creature and Creator being infinite, this road of getting closer to God in likeness it will never come to an end, neither will end this work of shaping the man according to the godlike archetype; so, the man won’t ever reach to know God as God know on Himself. This road is full of eternity’s pilgrims, lined up according to their ontological closeness to God, and according to their voluntary endeavor.” (Stăniloae 1992: 305-306)	Knowing God
306	“Closer to God are the Cherubs and the Seraphim, more far away are the people. But neither the Cherubs will ever end the road of the consummation. The angelic levels are always before us, but neither they will ever exhaust the road. The work of shaping them according to the godlike archetype wont’ ever come to an end, though they are constantly becoming more closer to the divine model. For the growing up	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	<p>in likeness through this ceaseless shaping it means diminishing the lack of likeness, for the increasing in seeing the godlike light it presupposes some sort of darkness mixed with the light on the inferior levels, and angelic progress is called at its turn as purification, or as “purification of nescience”. The eternal live opens to the man - who has been striving during his life on earth to purify himself of passions - not as a lack of movement but as a perspective of endless spiritual progress. But the progress by shaping the spirit, or by experiencing the infinite good things in the form of some lived structures, it starts for the man even before he enters the zone of the seeing of the godlike light. It accompanies in the form of the contemplation or of the intuition and of the spiritual experiencing, almost continuously, the rational and conceptual man’s knowledge itself. In the same time with the precisely defined forms and senses, the spiritual man notices also the mysterious background of the transcendence reality. But he doesn’t notice that chaotically, but structured in diverse modes and levels of the love.” (Stăniloae 1992: 306)</p>	
g. Seeing the Godlike Light as State of Supreme Spirituality of the One Who Sees It		
306	<p>“If to see the godlike light reaches the ones who has cleaned himself of passions and he has reached there by ascending the levels of the virtues to a fiery love for God, this will mean that he has spiritualized his being in such a way than itself his being has become warmth and light of the love for God and for his fellow humans, no longer having him any lack of</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

	sensitivity, or having any shadow of worry about himself. This state is the combined result of the man's effort and of the action of the Holy Ghost." (Stăniloae 1992: 306)	
306	"All these three things: a) that the light is the manifestation of the love, b) that the love is the work of the Holy Ghost, and c) that the one who is elevated to this state of light and of culminant love he forgets about his body's sensations, about the sensations produced by the world through his body, or he forgets even about himself, they were described thoroughly by Saint Simeon the New Theologian, in his <i>Hymns of the Godlike Love</i> and, in some measure, by Saint Gregory Palamas." (Stăniloae 1992: 306)	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light
307	"The love's warmth that becomes light it has in the same time its source in the work of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, by cleaning the soul up of anything that attracts the soul towards thickened pleasures, and in the same time by filling the soul up with delicate and fiery feelings of the love, better said by being Himself the source of these feelings and light sparks, He shown Himself as light. The light is some kind of state of the spiritualized improved, and transparent human being. The soul is filled up with cleanness, with kindness, with love, and the soul feels a great urge to open himself, to communicate his loving feelings, to communicate on himself. And the One Who communicated on Himself through the soul, in this total sincerity of the love, He is the Holy Ghost." (Stăniloae 1992: 307)	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

307-308	<p>“This love’s intensity, the blinding degree of the light poured in this love, it makes the body of whose experiences this light to be totally transparent to others, and to himself as inexistent.</p> <p>On the measure his spiritual sensitiveness has become more accentuated, his bodily sensations - caused in him by the contact with the world - have been overwhelmed. This is the supreme spiritualization. The body and the world aren’t abolished, but they become the environment which the interior light manifests in. There takes place a paradoxical thing: on one hand all the exterior things are overwhelmed, and on the other hand, a great love it overflows from within them, towards everybody. These things are explained by the fact that out of all of them it irradiates light.” (Stăniloae 1992: 307-308)</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light
308	<p>“The one who sees the light he has been so much united with it than he no longer knows himself as separated and differing from that light. And if the light is above any possibility of understanding it and of interpret it, he becomes to himself too as above any understanding. Everything has become a light that fills up all the things, and it has become a clean joy, an untold happiness. The differences persist ontologically but they are no longer being felt. Or, the one who sees the light and who feels the joy, he knows about himself only that he sees that light and that he feels that light and that that light isn’t something coming from himself.” (Stăniloae 1992: 308)</p>	Seeing the Godlike Unapproachable Light

308	<p>“Saint Gregory Palamas constantly repeated that the godlike light isn’t a material light, not even a light of the natural intelligence. It is a light of the love from above nature, in which has been transformed the nature itself of the one who sees the godlike light. It is the state o culminant spiritualization, or of cleanness, or of overwhelming the harsh impulses of the egotism, it is a state of supreme kindness, of gentleness, of understanding, and of love; it is a feeling of the spiritual thinness and lightness. This is the state of deification, of likeness to the godlike Spirit.” (Stăniloae 1992: 308)</p>	Deification
4. About Deification		
a. The Two Stages of the Deification		
309	<p>“The deification is the consummation and the full penetration of the man by God, given that on another way one cannot reach the consummation and the full spiritualization. The sin has chained up, as in an evil spell, most of the human nature’s powers. We do not exactly know the whole amplitude of the powers which our nature it capable of. The envy, the worry, the hatred, they paralyze our nature’s capabilities. The love we have for somebody, or which somebody has for us, the trust we are granted with or we grant it to somebody else, namely any getting out of the sinful egotism, it unchains within us powers which we haven’t suspected having</p>	Deification

	ourselves, just like the kiss of Prince Charming awakens Ileana Cosanzeana ⁶ from the paralysis of an unnatural sleep.” (Stăniloae 1992: 309)	
309	“While this state which the sin had cast the human nature in, it is a contrary of the nature state, we theoretically could say that the first level the human nature is elevated on it is that of true nature, but one cannot concretely distinguish a state of pure nature, because even the elevation of the nature to this state it cannot be done through the nature’s powers, in the sense that the nature will shake off, by itself, its powers’ sleep and it would remain only with those powers, but only through the collaboration with the godlike powers the nature can be elevated to and it can remain in this state. Thus, during the process of deification, in certain regards, the man doesn’t reach for a long time the level of full health of his nature, but in other regards he has exceeded, by the godlike grace, their natural level.” (Stăniloae 1992: 309)	Deification
309-310	“The light lightens in darkness for a long time. The new man grows up by fighting the remanences of the former man. He lives, ever since it has been sown in him the seed of the new man, namely from Baptism, on one hand a supra-natural life, but on the other hand he lives a sub-natural life too. The deification in a wider sense it starts from Baptism,	Deification

⁶ It’s about two characters of a Romanian fairy tale (E. I. t.’s n.).

	<p>extending along the entire spiritual ascension of the man, which also the man's powers are active in, namely along the purification of passions, of achieving the virtues, and of the enlightenment. And if in this ascension the man's natural powers are in continuous growth, in order to reach their apogee on the moment they have reached able to see the godlike light, by receiving as seeing power the work of the Holy Ghost, we will be able to say that the deification which this revival and growth it coincides to the process of the development of the human powers to their limit, or to the full accomplishing of the human nature, but also to their endless surpassing through grace." (Stăniloae 1992: 309-310)</p>	
310	<p>"The deification never stops, but it continues even beyond the last limit of the human nature, to infinite. We would call this last one as deification in a restricted meaning.</p> <p>In order to justify this affirmation of ours, we could bring the example of the deification of the Jesus Christ's humanity, which also actually started after His sufferings and through His Resurrection, when, according to Saint Gregory of Nyssa, the features and the works of the human nature are overwhelmed by the attributes and by the works of His godhead. This has been consummated through the ascent of Jesus to heavens, as man. This has made possible our personal deification too, also understood as an elevation above the human attributes and works and on the level of the godlike attributes and works. (<i>Contra Eunomium</i>, liber V)."</p>	Deification

	(Stăniloae 1992: 310)	
310	“While the deification in a wider sense it means the elevation of the man up on the highest level of his natural powers, or up to the full accomplishing of the man (Saitn Maximos the Confessor, <i>Capitum quiquies cent.</i> , G.P., 1189), for during the whole this time there is active within the man the godlike power of the grace too, the deification in a restricted meaning comprises the progress done by the man beyond the limit of his natural powers, beyond the margins of his nature, on the godlike plan from above nature (Saint Maximos the Confessor, <i>Capit. theolo. et oecon.</i> Cent. II, 68).” (Stăniloae 1992: 310)	Deification
311	“The two kinds of deification, namely the deification in a wider meaning and the restricted deification, they differ from one another, but there still is between them a continuity like between two stages of the same climbing, though in order to cross from the first stage to the second stage it is necessary a jump, for through the first one it works the man too, and through the second stage there is only God working.” (Stăniloae 1992: 311)	Deification
311	“If during the man’s spiritual ascension until a full development of his natural powers through their collaboration, the godlike grace hadn’t given another help except that one to help the man’s natural powers to be developed up to their limit, it would have been almost unjustified the name of deification given to this process, though it is being accomplished with the collaboration of the	Deification

	godlike power. But as the grace produces within man, even during this ascension, also effects that exceed the limits of the pure nature, this is an even more important reason why the name of deification cannot be denied either to the man's spiritual ascension from before reaching the ultimate limits of his natural powers." (Stăniloae 1992: 311)	
311	<p>"The ceasing of the man's spiritual powers it doesn't mean a total stopping of any activity or of any development of theirs. They continue working, but not by the fact that they could contribute with their natural resources, but exclusively by the fact of receiving the godlike energy. Somehow, the man remains active, but he is active by receiving the ever-increasing power of God. That's why the deification can be still considered as an experience which only the man is capable of. This man's power of receiving belongs to an endless development that, though it doesn't mean an increasing of the power of natural activity, or a widening of the human nature as intrinsic source of power and activity, it still means an increasing of his receiving power of his power of receiving and using on an ever-wider measure the divine energies (Saint Gregory Palamas, <i>Word III, Triad poste</i>; in <i>The Romanian Philokalia</i>, vol. VII, p. 303 (head no. 31)). This is because this increasing of the power of being imparted with the godlike grace, though it is being done through the grace's power too it still presupposes a virtual capacity of receiving such an increasement – and this is in a certain sense a</p>	Deification

	development of some nature's potentialities, of the nature's receiving potentiality." (Stăniloae 1992: 311)	
312	<p>"The man's receiving power mustn't be understood as a capacity of physical widening, but it must be understood in a spiritual manner, namely on the basis of an inward impulse at least virtually existing in the human nature, previously to reaching what it is received as a gift. This gift is described by all the Holy Fathers as lasting and as growing up forever and ever, and therefore the power for receiving it is like that too, though, on the other hand, they say that the man will "suffer" the deification, namely the man will passively suffer it, and the man won't produce it, for the man will have entered the endless resting. In the vision of Dionysus the Areopagite, all the angelic levels are eternally in a dynamic tension towards God, ever-progressing in deification. And Saint Gregory of Nyssa likens this ceaseless increasing gift, and its receiving, to the example of the Moses's climbing." (Stăniloae 1992: 312)</p>	Deification
312	<p>"Speaking about the ceasing of the human nature of working through its powers too, even on the smallest measure, we understand that the human nature has reached its development limit according to the nature, that it has reached its limit as source of power and activity, but not as reception potentiality. The progress in developing the human nature isn't finished, though as source and as subject of own power it no longer has any development, and in this sense the whole its own growing up in godlike works is by grace, and no</p>	Deification

	<p>according to the nature. But the fact itself that the ceaseless increasing and the deification still have as basis also a receiving potentiality seeded in the man's nature, it is being expressed in East by the fact that the man is created in the image and in the likeness of God. Through sin it hasn't been lost the image, but it has been stopped the process of the likeness to God. This process of likeness, by being taken in Jesus, it won't ever come to an end. The man becomes increasingly in the likeness of God, but without becoming identical to God. The man will advance forever in the "likeness" to God, in the ever-tighter union with God, but the man won't ever reach the identification to God; the man will be increasingly capable of mirroring God, but the man won't ever become what God is." (Stăniloae 1992: 312)</p>	
312-313	<p>"The likeness is different from identity, as the quality of god by grace it differs from the quality as God by nature too. For, by and large, the knower becomes increasingly alike the known, the man becomes and tends to become increasingly alike God, increasingly more of what God is, or, god by grace. Therefore, the process of deification being the same with process of the "likeness", it is in a certain regard a development by grace of a potentiality planted within man, especially because the "likeness" isn't else but a development of the "image". (Stăniloae 1992: 312-313)</p>	Deification
313	<p>"This development of the nature, be it even only as receptiveness, it is a new reason why between the deification</p>	Deification

	from the first and from the second stage there is no interruption, though there have been highlighted also incontestable differences between them and a jump from the first stage to the second one, meaning also a going out of the nature's laws by and large." (Stăniloae 1992: 313)	
313	"The deification in a restricted meaning, as process of man's consummation after the natural has reached the limit of its powers of activity and after it has ceased any active contribution from it, it belongs only to the age to come. During the life from here it is only anticipated for short moments, as an earnest." (Stăniloae 1992: 313)	Deification
b. The Deification in a Strict Sense		
313	"The most important problem is that of the report between deification and the human nature. As we have seen, the Holy Fathers say that through deification the human nature's works come to an end, being replaced for godlike works, the natural attributes being overwhelmed by the godlike glory." (Stăniloae 1992: 313)	Deification
315	"When looked in itself, the human nature doesn't become one with the godhead according to the nature. But together with the godhead, the human nature" it is being transformed at its turn in godhead", and "it no longer remains within its border and attributes" (Gregory of Nyssa). But this takes place only after resurrection, and not with the being. The true life from within body, by not being possible to remain in death, it has	Deification

	elevated by resurrection the body from corruption to incorruptibility. Like the fire hides within wood, but finally it burst up to surface, warming the wood and making it burning, so it has been the godhead hidden within body, until our death and during our death, for filling the body after with its life, as a first fruit of our nature, so that one can no longer discern each nature of His, but, the human nature of Jesus by being transformed through interpenetration with the godlike nature of His, it has received the attributes of the last nature, or the power of the godhead.” (Stăniloae 1992: 315)	
317	“The Catholicism cannot understand this doctrine of the man’s deification, for it doesn’t know the difference between the divine being and the divine energies. Consequently, in the opinion of the catholic theology the man couldn’t be deified but only be being united with the divine being. Anyway, what would manifest out of man, what would be reflected out of man it would be the divine being. By not being able to admit this, the Catholicism keeps the man in an existence totally separated from everything that is godlike. In Orthodoxy though, the nature of the man who is united with the divine energies it become an environment which these energies manifest through, the human nature itself remaining undiminished, as in the case of the sunlight and the sun warmth penetrate through and manifest within so many environments without annulling them and without identifying them to the sun. So, the human nature of Jesus hasn’t been	Theology

	<p>“transformed” in His godlike nature, after His Resurrection and Ascent. But it is a fact that after His Resurrection and Ascent, the human nature of Jesus has received new energies and new godlike works. The question is only if all the human energies and attributes have been suspended and if this suspension it means their abolishment or only their overwhelming and what do we understand this overwhelming like.” (Stăniloae 1992: 317)</p>	
318	<p>This overwhelming doesn't mean that the man becomes insensitive. He lives himself his new state as “god by grace”, being in the same time aware of his creatural according to the nature. He tastes a godlike happiness, but with his gratitude as creature, he experiences in himself godlike powers but being amazed for realizing that those powers do not come from himself. In other words, he is god, but in the same time he doesn't cease to be man; he is god through the things he accomplishes, through his functionalities, but he still is aware of being a god by the mercy of the unique and great God. This is the comprising of humanity sentiment which accompanies the manifestation of the godlike works destined to his subject. He lives the clean love, or the spiritual relation with God, on the measure which his bodily sensations have been overwhelmed, of pleasure and of pain, or those of envy or of pride. He lives the clean joy of everything that is good, decent, and harmonious. He is like God, and he is even god, but he still isn't God. He is a dependent god, if we say by using other</p>	Deification

	words the expression: “god by participation”. The awareness of this dependency it excludes any pantheistic identification of the man to God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 318)	
318	“The man’s deification means the crossing of the man from the created works to the uncreated works, on the level of the divine energies. This is what the man is imparted with, and not with the godlike being. So can be understood what the man assimilates like, the divine energies, increasingly more, without this assimilation ever coming to an end, for the man won’t ever assimilate their source itself, namely the divine being, in order the man to become God by nature, or another Christ. On the measure the man increases in his capacity of making himself subject to some ever-richer divine energy, these energies are unveiled to him out of the divine being in a greater amplitude.” (Stăniloae 1992: 318)	Deification
318	“Not even the divine energies won’t be received by us in their totality, for they never cease of continuously showing themselves within us, in ever changing proportions; and in the same time with them it grows up the power manifested through us and our understanding. If during our life on earth the divine energies descend on our lowest level where we are out of spiritual point of view, by compressing their infinite treasures in a potentiality, on the measure we grow up with our ghost, they actualize some of the infinity hidden within them. And our eternal ascension is in the same time an eternal elevation of the divine energies out of the potentiality	Divine Uncreated Energies

	which they have been lowered at.” (Stăniloae 1992: 318)	
318-139	“Not only Christ descended to us in order to elevate Himself again within us, but also the entire order of His uncreated truths. From contemplating Christ’s uncreated truths through the sensitive wraps in this live, we are elevated to contemplating in an unmediated manner, but we won’t cease advancing even then, on its endless levels. Their order unveils the Kingdom of Heavens, it is the divine environment uniting us but which distinguishes us, in the same time, from God; it both connects us to and keeps us different from the being of God.” (Stăniloae 1992: 318-319)	Deification
319	“There is an infinite world, of infinite levels and reliefs of spiritual life. This doesn’t mean that by being us in that world we won’t be into God, for God is everywhere, where the environment of His energies is. But still, we won’t be united with His being. Though, we will be increasingly closer to His being, on the measure we will be ever wider in our ghost in order to become subjects to some ever-increased divine energies.” (Stăniloae 1992: 319)	Divine Uncreated Energies
319	“The divine energies aren’t else but only the rays of the divine being, shining within the Three Divine Persons. And since the Word of God has embodied Himself, the rays of the divine being has been irradiating through his human face.” (Stăniloae 1992: 319)	Divine Uncreated Energies
319	“One can say that the world’s entities are the images of the	Divine Uncreated Energies

	<p>rationalities of the divine Logos, which are in the same time energies. Through creation, God has placed in existence a part of His infinite possibility of thinking and of working, in a form specific to the level of the human understanding and doing, in order to achieve a dialogue with the people, a dialogue through which the people to ascend increasingly more towards the likeness to God and towards the union with Him.” (Stăniloae 1992: 319)</p>	
319	<p>“The Embodiment of the Word has confirmed the value of the man and of these images of rationalities and energies on the man’s measure. But His Embodiment has given the man the possibility of seeing in the human face of the Logos, concentrated again, all the divine rationalities and energies. Thus, the final deification will consist of looking at and of living all the divine values and energies thought and irradiated, on the man’s supreme measure, in the face of Christ. But by this, on the face of each man will be mirrored in a luminous manner, through the rationalities and through the energies gathered within the man, the rationalities and the energies of the Logos. That’s why the eternal happiness will consist of contemplating the Christ’s face (Apoc. 22: 4). So will everybody be in God and we will see all the things in God, or God will be in all things and we will see Him in all the things, being as real the unitary presence of God in all the things as real and non-confounded to God will remain “all” the creatures gathered within Him.</p>	Deification

	This is the eternal perspective of the deification.” (Stăniloae 1992: 319)	
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